

SELFISH YOUNG MAN

An Honest Look at
Christ and Christianity
Plus Other Selected Essays



David Allan

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Introduction

So many good things have been given to me during my life, so many hand outs and hand ups. But youth, and the selfish ingratitude that goes with it, blinded me from realizing how deeply indebted I am to those who went before me. This book is a small effort at repayment, given to those who still struggle like me, and those who will follow.

It is not possible that all of my view points will make sense to you, nor should they, for we are all individuals and therefore different by definition. But we are all human, so I know having written open and honestly that some of my perspectives may be of value to you.

I will say this very plainly at the onset: Jesus would be grieved to hear some of the words that have been put in his mouth and to see what some organizations have turned his legacy into.

Although some individual churches may be of benefit to the spiritually dead or spiritually young, organized religions are useless. Generally speaking, the origins of all religions are based on sparks of enlightenment that have been warped into businesses and seats of power by egotistical people. False doctrines abound, presented like facts by charlatans who dare tell us they speak for God, as if they have some access to the Almighty that the rest of us do not.

The Christian religions, like all other religions, are a waste of time for spiritual adults. True religion is a personal matter and nothing about it, except love, is universal to us all.

The bottom line is that we are all gods, we are all christs, we are all members of the spirit, and Love is the only real authority that ever has, does, or will exist.

What I try to do in this book is to address some of these false religious doctrines, making corrections and explaining a number of other little understood things that both the scriptures and common sense reasoning reveal. In addition, I include a variety of essays on other topics and also share some of my personal experiences. My most important objective is to bridge the gap between religion and love, which should be the same thing, but are not in most churches. My hope is to help people realize the childishness of following someone else's opinion about the meaning and mysteries of life, which is what organized religions are, encouraging people instead to regard the spirit of love within them as the only real authority.

Although we should try to listen carefully to each other's opinions, as we will almost always learn something, we should never

subordinate the honest opinions of our heart to someone else's. Therefore, if you and I are both subject to the authority of love, while I may decide your opinion is not right for me, perhaps utterly reject it, not only will I tolerate your view point, I will defend your right to it.

I do not claim all the answers and opinions I put forth here are certain, except as they pertain to me, at this point in time. Indeed, it concerns me that time may reveal to me that some of my understanding was weak, perhaps even wrong. Often I reach a conclusion, only to learn something new that sheds better light and presents more questions. In the past, my reaction to that was to rewrite the part in question to reflect the better understanding. However, it is not possible to understand everything. And if a person waited to speak until he did know everything, then that person would never speak at all. But you can understand to the point of satisfaction, and this point is where I am. So when you judge my effort, I ask you consider: Did I at least get you to think and shed a little light somewhere? Read it, get out of it what you can, leave the rest behind.

I used a number of quotes from the Christian scriptures (sometimes as I recalled them, so they may be paraphrased). Some of the references and their subsequent logical conclusions will not be understood by readers who have not extensively studied the Bible. But everything one really needs to know can be seen through natural philosophy anyway, so even the layman should understand much of what I have to say. I also noted some of the scriptures I referred to so people could more easily find passages they may not be familiar with.

If you are not familiar with the scriptures of various religions, you might consider reading them. I think anyone who has, with an open mind, has benefited a little. However, understand that none of them are truly important and their endless study becomes a waste of time. This is because the spirit of "love one another" is a part of us all, as it always has been, so we all have access to this vastly superior information, if only we will listen.

Criticism of the things I have expressed in this book is certain. So be it. My only response is to say that I have examined myself closely and my heart is right with the spirit, at least as it concerns what I have written. It was the best I could do and I held nothing back if I thought it might help, even to my own embarrassment.

Again, I owe so many people who have done right by me over the years, many of whom did not get back anything of the sort. I sincerely thank you all.

David Allan

An Honest Look

Scriptures

The origin of the writings that became the Christian scriptures is something that most churches never share with their flocks. The following is a very brief overview of the history of those documents, the entirety of which is presented in very general terms.

The first gentile Christian churches had no writings whatsoever for about the first 40 years after Jesus' death. Everything was oral, with people assembling at individual homes and taking turns speaking about whatever they believed was inspired or edifying. Most of these people were converts from pagan religions in which they were already actively involved. Stories about Jesus and anything that might be related to his teaching were the main focus in these assemblies. Individual speaking being what it is, the tales passed from person to person and town to town with omissions or embellishments, pieces remembered incorrectly, or with things misunderstood, sometimes including various fabrications for whatever reason. In short, the stories were never retold exactly the same way in any two places.

Some of these stories eventually found their way into written form, whether mostly or partially true, or not at all. Within a few more decades there were also various letters from Christian leaders. Many of these assorted writings were copied and passed along over time, though not always written the same way when reproduced, and virtually never the same when translated. Given the nature and wisdom of man, even the original orations, written stories, and letters would have contained personal bias, errors, and omissions.

Within 100 years of Christ's death, most individual churches were collecting, some even creating various writings, which were administered by the budding hierarchy of administrators in those churches. The original writings that sprang up in these first churches were sometimes copied and shared with other churches, who then might share their copies with still more churches, and so on and so forth. This resulted in versions of the original writings that varied from one church to another, the differences ranging from just a little to very different. Where these scrolls or codices had gaps or obvious errors, church administrators might fill them in with whatever they deemed most advantageous for their self-interests, though usually they used their best opinions, although not always right.

The churches in some larger cities and a few small towns had outgrown meeting at just one home, so they coordinated meetings in public places, wherever they were not persecuted. They used multiple

homes or clandestine get-togethers in the bigger cities where they were unwelcome.

In these churches, increasingly springing up throughout the Roman Empire, there was also a movement away from the original church structure. What was once a group of equals was vanishing. Meetings wherein any member of the church could take a turn speaking as a teacher, sharing whatever moved them, were rapidly fading away. By the time 200 years had passed after Jesus' death, the original emphasis in most churches had nearly completely changed. Now only a select few administrators and leaders would regularly speak at their meetings. Often they would read from the plethora of writings they had by now accumulated and kept at that particular church, then give their opinions and comments while the majority of people quietly listened. In just a few generations the message of the christ Jesus had been altered dramatically, as were the original writings about his teachings to match the changing emphases. This is all the greater loss given the original documents were imperfect in the first place.

By the time organized religion had taken full control of Jesus' legacy, some 300 years after his death, Christianity was very public in some places and as widespread as the paganism that preceded it.

Administrative hierarchy existed in virtually every local church, and these people officiated virtually every aspect of every meeting. In their preaching they utilized a wide variety of the various versions of the many handwritten letters and stories that we now call "books" of the Bible. Also, by this time, nearly every gentile church had added enormous portions of the Old Testament writings from the Jews, which tripled the amount of words from which to draw material to craft sermons. Christianity was, in fact, becoming a very big business throughout the Roman Empire, steadily replacing the religious business of paganism and its unique mythologies.

Every individual church (there were no religions) used a different Bible, meaning a different collection of these "books." And in small to very large amounts, each of these books varied from the story or letter by the same name that might be in the Bible of another town's church.

Over time, as these churches evolved into political powers and businesses, administrators were able to push towards some standardization of their texts. In other words, since differences between churches injured their credibility, meetings started happening among neighboring church leaders, who then tried to decide which books, and which versions, would be best for them to use. Surely there were people who had good intentions by such things. But when we see how the early church, as a whole, moved

away from the equality that humble Jesus preached, and turned itself into businesses and positions of power, this is all the proof we need to reject these organizations.

We must also, in general, reject most of the scriptures as inspired by God. Common sense is more than enough to show it too, if we just allow ourselves to think. The nature of mankind being what it is, coupled with documented history, shows that each passing generation of early church administrators tinkered with the original writings they assembled for their own self-interests. Within a few hundred years after the death of Jesus, almost the entirety of Jesus' original message was lost or altered. All but gone was the story of a demon who found the key to life (love one another) and tried to help us other demons find their way.

The historical record indicates these early churches and their leaders had thousands upon thousands of heated doctrinal arguments with each other, which means that the people of their congregations had millions of disagreements over how to interpret what was meant by this, or what was meant by that.

However, the businessmen who took control of Jesus' legacy were able to agree on one thing: If they put Jesus above us, then they could be above us in his absence.

Abuses by the then established Christian churches continued to grow after this period almost totally unchecked, for about 1000 years, until about 700 years ago. The seeds of reform were slowly developing by then, and it was at this time that a few scattered individuals set about to divide the books of the Bible into chapters. The success of their various works gave encouragement to the next step, about 200 years later, when other individuals set about to number all the passages, sentences, and verses.

Once divided and numbered, most subsequent translators and scribes have been afraid to correct any errors that resulted from parceling documents that were reproductions of inferior manuscripts, which were never perfect in the first place. Understand, the first numbered versions were copies of copies, of copies of copies of copies... easily the 100th version of the original in many cases. After the chapter divisions and subsequent numberings, corrections of some of the mistakes and fictional additions became impossible in the minds of most translators and scribes that followed. Therefore, they simply smoothed over any gaps or inaccuracies that resulted from omissions, additions, and rearrangements as best as they could.

In short, after centuries of tampering with the ever decreasing original writings that became scriptures, it finally became difficult to

keep altering them. On the other hand, all the lies and mistakes made earlier were virtually cemented in place.

It was also around this time that the printing press was invented. This effectively gave the particular versions that were mass produced a more official status, deservedly or not.

In conclusion, the Christian scriptures are a mess, and they have been from the very beginning. But the facts about the origin of these books we call the Bible are seldom told by clergy to the laity.

Some ministers are so uninformed or compromised that they even say the Bible is the unquestionable Word of God.

Denominations

Which denomination is best? None of them. It can be surprising what some ministers and religious people will say in their arrogance, but pride is pride – and party spirit is just another form of it.

If an individual begins thinking that he is better than other people, then that person goes astray and the spirit is displeased. So how does being a group of individuals improve the same mistake?

The only intelligent way to judge a church is on an individual basis. By definition, a church is comprised of people, so the quality of a particular church is almost completely dependent on its ministers and congregation. Churches should not be franchised like businesses, and Christianity (and all religions) would be better off with no denominations at all, rather letting every individual church stand or fall on its own merits.

If a church develops branches, that is very good, but they must be independent after they mature. This is just the same as how children are managed by their parents until maturity, but then afterwards report directly to the spirit within them, meaning their own consciences.

After all, finding one's salvation happens the same way it has in every day and age – we accept the authority of love. It is never by being a member of a particular group. If being a Jew is not sufficient to save those that are found to be false, even though Jesus himself was a Jew, then how can being a member of a particular brand of Christianity save us?

The apostle Paul saw the very beginning of this sort of partisanship and rebuked those churches sharply, for some were claiming Paul as their leader, others Apollos, and yet others Peter.⁽¹⁾ But Paul put a stop to their rivalry by explaining that Jesus was their real leader. And I would add that Jesus pointed towards the spirit of God as the real guide, and that the spirit shows us that love is the only real authority people must follow.

The Pharisees

There is a popular misconception among many churchgoers that most people who do not attend church are lost souls, while most that do attend have found salvation.

That idea is very wrong since many of the elect (people who have decided to be obedient to the authority of love) never attend church, and among the people that do, many of them are not at all ruled by love.

The people who do attend church seem to fall into several distinct categories.

The first and oftentimes smallest group is the real believers. Formerly unwilling to accept the authority of love, they were won over by the word of their lord and the spirit at large. Having truly repented from the heart, their new and changing behaviors are positive proof of new persons in progress.

The second group is comprised of those that are as yet unwilling to accept the authority of love, but are making an effort to hear what the way is all about. From here they will decide to believe it, reject it, or pretend to believe it; and this group, the pretenders, is the third main group in most of today's churches.

I call this last group the "Pharisees" in sarcastic honor of their predecessors, and today's equivalent is no less a challenge since all their efforts are either to magnify themselves, or to conceal their disobedience to loving each other

Just as yesterday's Pharisees were filled with pride to be associated with the temple, so it is that their modern counterparts love the word "Christian" and to be associated with the church. But the reason is only to flatter themselves or to obtain recognition from others. Indeed, they often use their association with a church like a stick to prod others into flattering them with how righteous they are, but whenever they witness to anyone the only thing they really say is "I am better than you."

But all of this is no surprise, since the impact of this type of person has always been a burden on those who genuinely seek to understand spiritual things.

In Moses' day, though all the people were set free from physical slavery, only a few of their number found favor.

Were things any better in Jesus' day? Not much, for though all the people had the opportunity to be set free from spiritual slavery, having heard Jesus' message to love one another, only a few really

changed their selfish ways. But the wise understand that now is always the time to submit to the authority of love, instead of experiencing the second death later. Therefore, they reject their selfish pride and admit their past foolishness before the spirit.

As for the trials some say submitting to Jesus' message brings, that is just not true. Such trials are only illusions. Love carries its own happiness, for once it is embraced it takes root, and this creates a metamorphosis in our souls, a light in the dark.

So when today's pharisees cause trouble, remember that the people of today are not much different than the people who went before us.

Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

Even worse than the many false believers in today's churches are the people who sometimes lead them. The apostles spoke about these ministers of Satan and forewarned us of their arrival, noting that some had already managed to creep into positions of leadership. How much more so now then, with all these years gone by?

Outwardly friendly and caring, but inside arrogant and crafty, some ministers cleverly maneuver to amass great material wealth. Others are fiercely proud of their imaginary stature, always ready to quietly tear anyone to pieces who would dare question them. But Jesus said we could recognize them by their "fruits," and indeed we do, for their deeds speak loud and clear.

Some ministers actually demand we tithe 10% of our income to them, telling us how the Old Testament commands it. Then they turn around and correctly explain that the old law is dead and buried by the risen Christ Jesus. Shameful contradiction.

There are other popular approaches for bringing in lots of money. One is to deliver sermons that humiliate anyone unwilling to give generously. Another is to imply that our donations bring us closer to salvation. The first example is cruelty for the sake of money, but the second is even worse. Utterly wicked and very dangerous religion, it implies salvation can be purchased.

The apostle Paul warns: "I may have such absolute faith that I can move hills from their place, but if I have no love, I count for nothing: I may distribute all I possess in charity, I may give up my body to be burnt, but if I have no love, I make nothing of it."

Another sign of the wickedness of these godless workmen is the luxury in which they sometimes live, accumulating wealth as if business were their business. This is far different than John the Baptist, a true minister, who told us that if we had two coats and our neighbor had none, then we must give one to help.

If your ministers do not fully disclose the church's financial affairs on a regular basis, then do not give the wolves in sheep's clothing another cent – and find another church to attend.

Now to clarify an earlier point about tithing: How much should we tithe? The spiritual principles that the old law of Moses tried to represent will always remain, in this case, giving of ourselves to help worthwhile community service. Under the new covenant, the spirit is our guide, so the answer is that we must give whatever our heart tells us is right. For some of us it might be little or nothing, since if we are

poor we do not need to compound the problem. For others, it could be more than 10% of our income, perhaps much more.

But all of this brings up another spiritual lesson that the old law was forerunner to, namely, where to tithe?

The old physical law has all tithes going to the priests, which is what false ministers want, but the new spiritual law shows us that everyone ruled by love is a priest.

This does not mean we should not tithe to church ministers, quite the opposite if you attend a church. But you only need to tithe what you believe is right. The point is that all of us are full-time ministers.

The spirit is our guide for when and how to help in our own ministries, and when it is the lost we aid, they may be curious to understand our motivation. This is our opportunity to share the ageless message of “love one another,” even if only by the example of our deed itself.

Lastly, as to the power and lofty stature that these false workmen so often crave, magnifying themselves and/or taking advantage of those who esteem them, I will say only two things. First, it bears repeating what Jesus said, “You will know them by their fruit.” Second, remember that every believer reports directly to the spirit of love. No person is in authority over another in the spiritual realm. Be sure any minister you choose to follow or assist understands this, realizing they are only your friend, and not your superior.

Women Ministers

Many churches prohibit or discourage women ministers. They often try to justify this errant behavior by citing the apostle Paul's teachings. For example: "A woman must listen quietly in church and be perfectly submissive; I allow no woman to teach or dictate to men, she must keep quiet." And again, in another letter he says, "They are not allowed to speak; they must take a subordinate place, as the law enjoins. If they want any information, let them ask their husbands at home; it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in church." The letter then continues by asking, "You challenge this rule? Did God's word start with you?(1)"*

Well, I do challenge that rule. Paul is wrong. And as to the question of with whom did God's word start, I answer by asking if it started for us with Paul or Jesus? Should we teach Christianity or Paulianity?

First, that a woman can instruct men is proved by the fact that not all of the Old Testament era leaders were men. In fact, one leader, namely Deborah, was judge over the entire nation of Israel, and it was through her that the spirit of Jesus chided Barak to follow his orders to go into battle.(2) Would Paul have disobeyed because the rebuke came through a woman?

Second, that a woman may speak in church is proved by the prophetess who scripture records was "never away from the temple... at that very hour she came up and spoke of Him to all."(3) Would Paul have told her she was disgraceful or to "shut-up" as she stood there rejoicing over the infant Jesus? Of course not.

Indeed, Paul even attempts to defend his errant position by claiming "the law enjoins it." In fact, the law does not enjoin it. But rather the "law keepers," that is to say, the Jews of that day, twisted the law in their arrogance and jealousy to say that the law that shows differences between the sexes actually shows women to be inferior.

The scriptures do testify that man was created first and woman second, but this is not a statement of worth. Rather, this is simply a point of reference for the spirit to begin teaching our dull minds about love and our creation.

Understand that neither "man" nor "woman" was spiritually first. The spiritual principles that physical man and woman represent (give and receive) occur simultaneously in the pure and perfect spiritual sense. For if receive happens before give, then this is "stealing," a form of violence and a sin. And if give happens without receive

happening at the same time, then it would be “force,” a form of violence and a sin.

Furthermore, even if Paul did mistakenly believe the law of Moses enjoined such behavior, that old law is dead now, replaced by a new covenant that is purely spiritual in nature – which is exactly what Paul has argued in other places. He said of the old law that Jesus had “nailed it to the cross,” and in another place, “there is no room for male and female, you are all one in Christ Jesus.” So we see clearly that Paul has testified against himself on the matter.

But that is not the worst of Paul’s mistaken thinking, for after he tells Timothy that women can never teach men and that they must keep quiet, he attempts to justify it by saying, “For Adam was created first, then Eve...” This is true, but so what.

To begin with, how does having been created first merit any special goodness? The other animals were created before Adam, yet he was foremost among them. Consider also that Cain was created, so to speak, before Abel. How can he possibly claim that being first means being superior. No indeed. Adam and Eve were meant to be equals, even though different – and different does not mean inferior.

Paul then continues, saying, “Adam was not deceived, it was Eve who was deceived and fell into sin.” Again, this is true, but again it is irrelevant. Paul has totally missed the obvious question: Since Adam and Eve were both of the same flesh, and both had the same sinless spirit within them, what would Adam have done if he were tempted first? The answer, of course, is that Adam would have done the exact same thing! Eve sinned first because she was tempted first.

For the stubborn minded now: Understand Eve was not tempted first because she was weaker, but because she manifests “receive” in the union, which is the only place any thing trying to be seen as “give” could go prior to their separation by this original mistake.

Lastly, it is important to remember that the spirit was given to all believers. This is exactly what the true prophecies foretold, and exactly what happened on the Day of Pentecost after Jesus’ resurrection. Therefore, the question of whether or not a woman can instruct a man is very clear indeed. The answer is yes, and always has been.

* These verses conclude Chapter 14 of 1st Corinthians. Based on the text, the correct verse order is to relocate verses 37-40 after the first part of verse 33, then follow verse 40 with the remainder of verse 33 and verses 34-36 which brings chapter 14 to a close. If you read the verses I mentioned in their numerical order, and then read them in their correct order, you will see how obvious it is that some scribe

altered their original order, and in so doing changed one of Paul's errant opinions into an actual command from the spirit.

Thankfully, the evidence we need to prove this is in verse 37 itself and in verses 38-40 which follow; for it is clear from the text that the command from the Lord is about decorum in the church when believers prophecy or speak in tongues, not about the subordination of women.

More important, we have the spirit itself to prove it, for simply by thinking we come to realize such a self-evident truth. We all had mothers who taught us! A man does not grow from childhood into adulthood to find himself not only equal to, but spiritually superior to his mother. However, he may come to see the subtle differences, generally speaking, between their genders, as a daughter may learn similar things from watching her father. All will be blessed for the increased knowledge.

Of course, this rearrangement of Paul's words was easy to do since it fit right in with his other incorrect teachings about women, teachings that differ vastly from what Jesus taught and what some true prophecies foresaw.

Jesus never commanded such behavior towards women. He could not have because it would be contrary to what he previously taught in person.

Long before that, Deborah judged the entire nation of Israel. When Jesus was a baby, a woman prophesied at the temple in Jerusalem in front of him and his parents. These things happened under the old physical law. How much more would such things be welcome under the new covenant of spiritual law? Welcome indeed! This fact is proved by the spirit itself, for we know that it was given to "all who were gathered" on Pentecost – male and female alike. Jesus told us, "The flesh profits nothing." Clearly then, the spirit never told Paul that women could not teach, could not speak in church, and must be subordinate. Just as clear is that the apostle's teachings about women are often wrong.

Finally, since it is clear in much of Paul's writing that he is trying to follow the spirit of love, how is it that he went astray regarding women?

In my opinion, Paul is turned aside from the true way because of the incredible hardness of the people's hearts, just as Moses turned aside when he permitted divorce, and again when the people's wickedness made him doubt at Meribah. I think Paul was intimidated by society as it was, therefore he allowed the status quo to continue, rather than face the hostile reaction he would get from so many men if he ever told them plainly that their women, though different, were equal. But

by never losing sight of the most important thing – teaching the people to “love one another” – he knew all else would have to follow in time, even if it took a little longer.

Holy Days

In the Law of Moses, holy days are a physical representation of the still forming spiritual world of a coming christ.

Before talking about these holy days, which are of minor interest at most, it is important to note these days are no longer in effect, since the christ Jesus has begun a new covenant. This new covenant is purely spiritual in nature and has only one commandment: “Love one another,” a commandment so profound it can only be written on our hearts.

Some churches teach that believers are still obligated to keep these days, but they are as far astray as churches who teach that Easter and Christmas are holy.

They often try to justify their error by citing certain scriptures. For example, when Moses commanded the Israelites to observe these days, he said that they were “permanent statutes.” Also, the apostle Paul sometimes observed these days depending on what church he was visiting at the time. In addition, Paul once wrote, “Everyone must be convinced in his own mind; the man who values a particular day does so to the Lord.” Let us examine these things, starting with Paul’s position.

Admittedly, Paul tolerated some congregations to continue observing days, but his letters show he discouraged it regularly and never instituted it among any congregations. And as far as Paul celebrating these days, that was purely incidental to his attending Jewish/Israelite festivals to spread the news that their christ had indeed finally come.

Paul understood the law of Moses served only as physical representation of spiritual ideals, which are now here in their fullness for some of us as manifested in the christ Jesus. Of course, the highest spiritual ideal contained in the old holy days is that every day is a holy day, because every day is to be without sin. But all of this is moot now, since the old law is dead. This is why, in arguing against the old law, Paul said of Jesus, “He canceled the regulations that stood against us – all these obligations he set aside when he nailed them to the cross.”

And again, in another letter, he wrote this very sharp rebuke to a church interested in keeping the law of the old covenant, saying, “I simply want to ask you one thing: Did you receive the spirit by doing what the law commands or by believing the gospel message? Are you

such fools: Did you begin with the spirit only to end now with the flesh?"(1)

So we see Paul's true feelings on the matter clearly. He tolerates observing the old holy days in the already established Jewish churches, but discourages it as having become needless, and forbids such things in all the new churches he is shepherding.

Now as for Moses saying these holy day observances were "permanent statutes," that is true. But what happens when the spirit of Jesus, who gave the ideas in the law to Moses in the first place, says that the old law is finished? Obviously, that law is dead. And this is precisely what has happened, for a true prophesy says this very thing: "A day comes, the Eternal promises, when I make a fresh compact with all the house of Israel – not like the compact I once made with their fathers, the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt's land... this is the compact I make with Israel in the end; I will put my law within them, writing it on their hearts."(2) And when Jesus completed his work (having ascended and sent back the spirit to help), this new covenant was complete.

Having said all this, we can now take a look at the old Law's Sabbaths, special Sabbaths, and special observances.

Please note that the special Sabbaths, of which there are seven each year, are called by a variety of names. They include "great" days, "high" days, or they were sometimes just called the Sabbath, like the regular seventh day observance was called.

A good way to visualize these days is to look at them on a calendar. I have reconstructed a partial calendar from the year Jesus was crucified to picture them and included it at the end of this chapter. Only the 1st, 3rd, and 7th months are shown, as they are all that are necessary.

Also, for those of you unfamiliar with this subject, the Jews did not use the Julian calendar that most of the Roman Empire used to chart the days (until around 1582 when it was replaced by the Gregorian calendar we still use today). Instead, the Jews of that day used a lunar calendar that marked the beginning of each year around the vernal equinox (the beginning of Spring). It consisted of alternating 30 day months, and 29 day months, for a total of 354 days per year. Since this would quickly make the seasons out of line with the solar year of 365-1/4 days, they added an additional month to their calendar as needed, approximately every 3 years. This kept the holy days relatively stationary, so they always happened at the same general time each year.

As you look at the calendar and then the brief summary of regular Sabbaths, "great/high day" Sabbaths, and special observances,

remember that the Jews measured a day from sunset to sunset. Therefore, each day on this calendar would end at sunset, having begun on the preceding day at sunset. For example: The paschal lambs were always slain in the afternoon of the 14th day of the first month of the year (on the Jewish calendar), and the Passover supper was eaten by all of Israel just before the sun set. After the supper, when the sun sets, the 14th day is ended and the 15th day begins. Under the old Judaic law, which was also called the law of Moses, this 15th day is the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the first of the 7 annual high holy days.

Here is a brief overview of all the Old Testament holy days and commemorative events. Note that I used the English names of the days to make the calendar that follows easier to understand. I call the first day of the week Sunday, the second day Monday, etc.

Seventh Day Sabbath

These were the regular holy days, observed on the last day of every week. "During six days work may be done, but on the seventh day, there is to be a Sabbath of entire rest, and a sacred gathering..."

Passover

This was not a holy day, but rather a holy event, the first of two each year. It was commemorative of the miracle that led to the Israelite exodus from the bondage of physical slavery to Egypt. "On the fourteenth day of the first month towards evening, the Passover of the Eternal begins."

Days of Unleavened Bread (Festival of Unleavened Bread)

A special seven day period that opened and closed with a "high" holy day. "On the fifteenth day of the same month the festival of unleavened bread in honor of the Eternal begins: for seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day of the festival you must hold a sacred gathering...and on the seventh day you must hold another sacred gathering."

First Fruits Wave Offering

This was not a holy day, but rather another holy event, the second of two each year. It was commemorative of the future miracle (the coming christ Jesus) that would lead to his world's exodus from the bondage of spiritual slavery to sin. "You shall bring a sheaf from the first fruits of your harvest to the priest, who shall wave the sheaf to and fro before the Eternal, that you may be accepted; he shall wave it on the day after the Sabbath. On the day you wave the sheaf, you

must offer an unblemished male lamb as a burnt offering to the Eternal...until you have brought the offering for your God you must eat neither bread nor grain” (from any new harvest of the new year).

Day of Pentecost (Feast of First Fruits)

This was a “high” holy day. “You bring the sheaf of the waved offering, you shall count seven full weeks, fifty days to the day...and on that day you shall proclaim a sacred gathering.”

Days of Trumpets

This was a “high” holy day. “On the first day of the seventh month you must hold as an entire rest, a day of remembrance accompanied by trumpet blasts, and a sacred gathering...”

Day of Atonement

This was a “high” holy day. “On the tenth day of this month, however, which is Expiation day, you must hold a sacred gathering; you must abstain and fast...”

Days of Booths and Last Great Day

A special seven day period that opened with a “high” holy day, and when the seven days ended, was immediately followed by another “high” holy day. “On the fifteenth day of this seventh month the festival of booths begins, for seven days, in honor of the Eternal. On the first day there shall be a sacred gathering...and on the eighth day you shall hold a sacred gathering...”

Here is a question: Were all of these seven high holy days and the holy observances/events fulfilled in the same year?

Obviously, the two holy observances/events happened in the same year, for Jesus was crucified on Passover and ascended to the Father when the First Fruits Wave Offering took place. Also certain is that the first three of the seven high holy days have been fulfilled. The first two of these are the First and Seventh Day of Unleavened Bread, symbolic of our creation and God’s resting afterwards. The third of the seven is the Day of Pentecost, symbolic of receiving the spirit of love, which came to us shortly after Jesus died and arose.

What about the other four high holy days? Were they fulfilled in the same year?

The answer as I see it is yes. Just before his execution, Jesus asked his father that he be “spared this cup if it were possible.” He also once said, “All things are possible for them that believe.” Pause for moment and consider the implications in those two comments by

Jesus...! In addition, shortly before Jesus was led away to execution, he told his disciples "From now on you see the Father." These are also extremely important words from Jesus. Lastly, we have the example of Isaac the son being spared by Abraham the father.

To put this all another way, a key of any christ is the leap of one's essence from the temporary physical realm into the eternal spiritual realm. So the other holy days, by definition, become purely spiritual immediately after the Day of Pentecost was fulfilled. In short, in the new covenant Jesus wisely allows the whole spirit to help us in place of just himself. His selfishness has been subdued, and the authority of love, which he has been following, has been rightly elevated to his supreme guide. We all need to be the same way in this regard.

However, since some would endlessly argue "no" to my point of view, I will suggest an alternative answer to the question of whether all the holy days were fulfilled, which is: "It is not important."

Why unimportant? The answer is because if we truly accept the authority of the spirit of love, anything remaining from the former physical law is by definition irrelevant.

As to the plethora of new holy days that sprang up among the gentiles, all are meaningless from the start.

For example, look at Christmas. This day is celebrated as the day Jesus was born, but the date of his birth is unknown.

Many of the early Christian churches invented holy days, their twisted reasoning being that it would help the spread of Christianity to have their own celebrations whenever there was a traditional pagan festival. Hence, we have Christmas at the winter solstice, which was December 25 on the Roman Empire's calendar that was used in those days.

In short, this day, and all other Christian so called holy days are pure fiction, marketing decisions at heart, concocted by parasites that took control of Jesus' legacy and turned it into a business.

In fact, Christmas is a relatively late-in-coming artificial holy day, since early church records have absolutely no record of this festival, though other man-made holy days and observances were already in place. Today, however, the celebration of Christmas has become so widespread that many people truly believe it is really a special day, and have never once heard that it originated from pagan festivals at the winter solstice.

Does all of this mean that we cannot enjoy Christmas festivities? Not at all. But true religion is simply loving one another and is not contained in any ritual or tradition, no matter how wise it appears on the outside. If we want to follow a particular tradition, in this case giving gifts or sending cards, that is just fine, if your heart is in it. But

proclaiming the day as Jesus' birthday is senseless because no one knows when that was. More importantly, even if we did know the day we could not ascribe any holiness to it, since every other day is just as valuable.

Again, the spirit reveals that every day is a holy day, for every day should be without sin.

The so-called holy days of Easter Sunday and Good Friday are more Christian mythology. In fact, not only did the earliest churches never celebrate such a tradition, Easter was derived from a pagan festival held during the vernal equinox and devoted to a fertility idol.

Did Jesus die on a Friday afternoon and was he resurrected on the following Sunday morning?" That answer is an emphatic "No." Jesus said about his death, "the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."⁽¹⁾ This is about 72 hours and is not even close to the day and a half that most preachers expound. Jesus died and was resurrected three days and nights later – just like he said would happen.

In fact, we can actually see when everything took place by examining the four gospel accounts, then putting all the facts together. (But first we will need to address one minor point on which the four gospel accounts are in disagreement. And before we do that, we need to look at how the first three gospels evolved.)

To begin with, Mark wrote an account of Jesus' life and teachings many years after the events. He was witness to none of the events he described. As time went on his written record was copied over and over and passed along to different churches. During this period, many other teachings of Jesus, whether true or false, in whole or in part, passed from person to person orally. It soon followed that other Christians would construct newer written records that were more complete. Luke and the author of the book titled Matthew simply used versions of Mark's account as a blueprint to incorporate their own expanded narratives.

The reason I am spending some time on the origin of the first three gospels is because they disagree with John's version of the events, not about what happened, but rather when things happened. The Apostle John's version of when these events happened is correct, while the others do not match his account on one particular point. Some might want to argue that it is "three against one" as regards the point of conflict. What I have shown here is that it is really only "one against one," since Luke and the author of Matthew simply copied this portion of Mark's version into their own words and in so doing made the same mistake.

The following verses are from bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John:

Matthew 26:17

“On the first day of unleavened bread, the disciples came up and said to him, ‘Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?’”

Mark 14:12

“On the first day of unleavened bread, the day when the paschal lamb was sacrificed, the disciples said to him, ‘Where do you want us to go prepare for you to eat the Passover?’”

Luke 22:7-9

“Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the paschal lamb had to be sacrificed. So Christ dispatched Peter and John, saying, ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us to eat.’ They asked him, ‘Where do you want us to prepare it?’”

John 13:1

“Now before the Passover festival Christ knew that the time had come for him to pass from this world to the Father.”

John’s account after this verse shows the sequence of events that followed and makes it clear that this night “before” Passover was Jesus’ last before being crucified.

As we look at the comparison, we see the disagreement between John’s account and the others. But not only is this part of the books of Matthew and Luke simply a rewording of Mark’s account, all three make a statement that is impossible. All claim that Jesus is going to eat the Passover on the First Day of Unleavened Bread, but these are two different days. The Passover is always eaten at the end of the day, shortly before nightfall. After sunset is when the First Day of Unleavened Bread begins. A minor point, but any citizen from the area would know the difference, and so would anyone who was an eyewitness. But John is a resident of that region. And John is an eyewitness to the events. Furthermore, John is a disciple, an original apostle. He therefore is absolutely familiar with the special observances and holy days of the Jews. So who has the facts straight as to when everything happened, Mark or John?

And if you think about John’s version of when everything took place, and how Jesus and his disciples were eating the Passover meal before the rest of Israel would on the next day, it makes perfect sense.

Jesus himself is the Passover sacrifice for his whole world on the next day.

There are more proofs as well: The Pharisees said of putting Jesus to death, "It must not be during the festival; that would mean a popular riot."⁽²⁾ Both Mark and the author of Matthew made this statement in their accounts, but the festival begins on the First Day of Unleavened Bread, which is the day they said Jesus was arrested and crucified. Obviously, they confused when things happened, having been more concerned about what happened.

And in Luke's errant account we find one of the strongest proofs for John's version. He states that the two apostles Jesus sent to prepare the Passover for him were Peter and John.⁽³⁾ Since John is the very person who is preparing the meal, it makes sense to believe his account of the events that shows Jesus ate the Passover a day early.

Lastly, the scriptures record the Pharisees wanted Jesus' and the two criminals' legs broken to hasten their deaths, because "it was a day of preparation... for that Sabbath was a great day."⁽⁴⁾ (A day of preparation is any day immediately before a Sabbath.)

Notice the coming Sabbath was a "great day" Sabbath. Only seven of these happen in each year, and the first one was always the First Day of Unleavened Bread. This is positive proof that Jesus was crucified on Passover.

But when was Jesus resurrected? It was three days and three nights later, just like he said.

We know from the scriptures Jesus died at "about the ninth hour" by the old methods of telling what time of day it was. This translates to about 3:00 p.m. as we tell time today. This means we can add 72 hours and almost pinpoint the time he was resurrected. When Mary arrived at the tomb Jesus had already been resurrected since around 3:00 p.m. the previous afternoon! Nobody knew it because the day he rose was a regular 7th day Sabbath. All his followers were still keeping the commandment to rest and refrain from working on the Sabbath. But early on the first day of the week Mary came to the tomb with the burial spices she had prepared and made the great discovery.

Some might have some question as to why Jesus did not go tell his disciples he was resurrected as soon as it happened. The answer is that since it was the Sabbath he was still observing the day of rest himself, for he had not yet ascended to the Father.

Others might ask why Mary did not come to the tomb with her burial spices sooner than she did? The answer cannot be certain and one would think she would have known Nicodemus took care of this

matter. Perhaps she simply went to the tomb to mourn and we are the victims of more creative writing in those papers we call scripture. Assuming though, that her actions were historical fact, logic provides a very probable conjecture if we examine the scriptural accounts and remember the customs of that time.

The Law of Moses forbids any work to be done on any Sabbath. The Sabbaths occurred on the seventh day of each week and on seven other special days each year. A “day of preparation” was the day before any of these Sabbaths. In general, these preparation days were very hectic as any time-sensitive work projects would need to be finished by sunset, the next day being unavailable to complete them. The day the Passover event was held was also always a day of preparation, because the Sabbath of the First Day of Unleavened Bread always follows. But extremely little regular work would get done on this one particular preparation day each year. This is because the Passover celebration was a very big event in the Jewish community in Jesus’ time, and every family was expected to partake in the ritual, which required extensive preparation in itself.

Jesus died shortly before the Passover supper. The sunset came soon after this, which marked the beginning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread, and all work had to stop. After this Sabbath, Mary would have used the “common” day that followed to prepare things for her own household, since this day was yet another “day of preparation,” for the regular 7th day Sabbath was coming the very next day. In short, this particular preparation day would have been exceedingly busy for her, as she tried to catch up from yesterday while preparing for tomorrow.

So we see that following Passover, three full days – a great day Sabbath, a day of preparation, and a 7th day Sabbath – took place before Mary could go to the tomb. Then she had to wait a little longer, until sunrise of the next day in order to have sufficient light to work and hopefully find nearby help to roll away the stone.

Lastly, why did Jesus not ascend to his Father on the day he was resurrected? This is because “all things written about the Son of Man in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled,”(5) as Jesus himself said. This being the case, he could not ascend until the high priest performed the “first fruits wave offering.” Historically, this was always done on the first day of the first new week following Passover. And the scriptures tell us how Jesus told Mary to leave and go tell his brothers that he was “ascending to my Father and yours, to my God and yours.”

1st Month

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Passover Supper	15 1st Day of Unleavened Bread	16	17
18 1st Fruits Wave Offering	19	20	21 7th Day of Unleavened Bread	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	28	30	

3rd Month

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Pentecost	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

7th Month

						1 Day of Trumpets
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 Day of Atonement	11	12	13	14	15 1st Day of Booths
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 Last Great Day
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

Jesus' Death and Resurrection

	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
12:00am					
1:00am					
2:00am					
3:00am					
4:00am					
5:00am					
6:00am					Jesus appears to Mary
7:00am					
8:00am					
9:00am					
10:00am	Jesus crucified				
11:00am					Wave Offering & Jesus' Ascension
12:00pm					
1:00pm					
2:00pm					
3:00pm	Jesus dies			Jesus resurrected	
4:00pm					
5:00pm	Passover Supper				
6:00pm					
7:00pm*					
8:00pm	1st Day of Unleavened Bread Sabbath begins		Regular Sabbath begins		
9:00pm					
10:00pm					
11:00pm					

* The Jewish day was from sunset to sunset, approximately 7:00pm in early spring

We Are Gods

The creation itself shows us that we are already a part of something that is greater than ourselves, and that we can grow to become just like it. Simple examples would be how some acorns become oak trees and some caterpillars become butterflies.

Do you know we are gods? This is what the scriptures teach us, though we seldom hear it from the pulpit. In fact, many preachers teach the very opposite, saying we are not and never will be. Such ministers have not understood the scriptures very well because the evidence is overwhelming.

To begin with, before creating us, God said: "Let us make man in our own image." What could be clearer than this! There are many more proofs in the scriptures that we are gods.

For instance, when the Pharisees challenge Jesus for saying he was God's son, he rebukes them by replying that it was written in the law that we are all gods. (1) And from the Psalms, written of our need to repent from sin and turn to his ways: "Though you are gods, all sons of the Most High, yet, like mere men, you shall die, you shall perish like a demon." (2)

Here is yet another enlightening scripture: "We had fathers of our flesh to discipline us, and we yielded to them. Shall we not far more submit to the father of our spirits, and so live?" (3)

David saw all this; and what did he say of it? He burst into song, declaring, "I thank thee with all my heart, I sing thy praise in face of all the Gods." Then closing the same song, he sings, "Eternal One, thy kindness never fails, thou wilt not drop the work thou hast begun." So, indeed, even though we sinned, God is making us into his own image – he has not changed his mind.

Jesus told us about it himself when he said, "Whatever the father does, the son also does the same," and "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then ask whatever you like and you shall have it."

Lastly, consider these amazing words, also from Jesus: "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed...nothing would be impossible for you." Truly, anyone for whom anything is possible is a god indeed!

In fact, we are already so powerful that not only our prayers, but even our thoughts are sometimes brought to life by the spirit, often without our realizing it.

Marriage in Heaven

Jesus said, "When people rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are married, they are like the angels in heaven."

Does this mean that you would not be best friends with your beloved in the next age, if you both desire it? Not at all, for Jesus is speaking only of physical marriage, not spiritual union.

Consider what John the Baptist said of Jesus: "He who has the bride is the bridegroom, the bridegroom's friend, who stands listening to him, is heartily glad at the sound of the bridegroom's voice. Such is my joy, and it is complete." So there is a bride and a marriage, spiritually speaking.

Jesus assured us that, "if two of you agree on earth about anything, it will be done for you by my father in heaven." Therefore, if a couple who are only physically married desire earnestly to be spiritually married, they will be, as simple as that.

More noteworthy is that Jesus uses marriage more than once to describe what heaven is like. "The realm of heaven," he said, "may be compared to a king who gave a marriage banquet..." And in another place, Jesus said, "Then shall the realm of heaven be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride." (1)

Note that the words "and the bride" are missing in many of the ancient manuscripts which were in turn used for most of the modern translations. Since the words are a perfect fit with the spirit of love, the early omissions are the result of tampering. I would also add that it appeals to a selfish man that he should have a multitude of wives, yet those women may only have him.

In marriage, Solomon was not blessed for his multitude of carnal unions, but he was blessed for the one companion who loved him without reservation. Speaking of him in a mighty parable, his true soul mate, the queen of his heart rejoiced, "Maidens of Zion, come, look at my king, crowned by his mother, the day of his marriage, the day of his rapture." (2)

Eternal Hell

Do the wicked really go to a place of fire to writhe in endless agony forever and ever? Absolutely not, and the mere idea of such a thing is a vulgar obscenity to the spirit.

This fictional concept was created many centuries ago by greedy priests to terrify the laity, thereby suspending their common sense and logical reasoning. The church's goal, of course, was the people's submission to priestly authority and acceptance of their twisted message. It continues to exist in the doctrines of many churches today, for the same reason, and also because some people have no taste for mercy or forgiveness.

This is not to say that eternal punishment does not exist in a sense, but what it entails is not so endlessly hateful.

Pause a moment and reflect on the difference between punishment and punishing.

We came into being by the power of God, and that power is love, and so it is love that sustains us. Are we to believe that the power of love will eternally sustain someone's existence on the one hand so it can forever torture them on the other hand? The whole idea of eternal hell collapses in its absurdity.

Eternal punishing is crazy because it would mean that love is unforgiving and sadistic. Love is endless mercies and eventual forgiveness for anything – always. Be warned though, this is not to say that those who rejected the authority of love will not suffer the harvest of pain and destruction that they sowed, for indeed they will. This is the second death in the place called the lake of fire.

And yet, even so, the spirit in its infinite love will some day save those who do die and perish in unbelief, for the lake of fire is only a parable for living with death in our future. Therefore, if someone dies without having submitted to the authority of love, they will simply find themselves consigned to the prison of life in a mortal form again. That next age will be a new world for them, and nothing will have survived from their past, not a single memory, except their final thought, from the heart, which will be, "I am nothing."

Fortunately, this tragic final admission draws the spirit's attention. For this life and the punishment that results from not using it properly is as angry as a loving god gets with his disobedient children. By a god's very nature they are simply unable to allow any of us to die and suffer forever.

Love always triumphs.

It is for this reason, though every hateful spirit will be dead and gone, the spirit of God in its overwhelming love and mercy relents. Solomon says that God will “bring back whatever is lost.” The commitment of the spirit to love is so profound, so eternal, it says of love’s authority, “Every knee shall bow” and “Every tongue confess.” And we know that such honesty by a demon always catches the spirit’s notice, and that any good thing will eventually lead to life. No one will be left out forever.

In fact, we actually see mercy for spirits who are still dead forming in advance, when Jesus told us the parable of the rich man in torment, while the beggar he ignored was in comfort. Jesus said that some spirits in Paradise wanted to cross over and help.⁽¹⁾ Since it is always lawful to do good, and compassion is very good indeed, God will one day allow their crossing into the abyss to help.

When will that day be? Only at the beginning of a new age, when all members of the next christ want to help, for there must be complete unity and agreement among all members of the spirit in order to cross into the abyss. This cannot happen until every tear of the newborn is wiped away and forgotten, erased by the joy of their togetherness. The misery they suffered at the hands of those they now intend to help will be counted as forgiven, as they themselves were once forgiven.

So we see that eternal punishment is in the form of missing an opportunity that can never be regained, until the consequence of neglecting it is incurred. That consequence, for those who refused the authority of love, is death, and they will have forever missed salvation – at this time.

And knowing that another chance will someday come in another age will be of no solace at all for those who rejected the authority of love. They must perish into nothingness, while people they once knew rejoice with each other and possess happiness beyond comprehension, each actually saying of themselves: “I am.” Meanwhile, the final words of the lost as they die their second death (spiritually) will be “I am nothing,” and this will happen at the very feet of those they once despised.

Does this mean that Jesus comes to die again? Not at all. A new christ comes for a new world, and that will be each of us someday, if we have not already done so, or are not already in the process.

We see this clearly when the next christ (that spoke to the apostle John in the book of Revelations) says to any believer at the end of that age, “I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”⁽²⁾ And so again, a christ is keeping his promise to give his loved ones all that is his, just as his father gave everything to him.

So now we see our future, present, or past. Every newborn sinless child of god one day enters the abyss, just as Jesus did, declaring “Let there be light,” which is an analogy for giving love. And as proof of the eternal spark of life (love) that this new christ now has inherent, they resolve to make those among the lost that are repentant into their own image (spiritually), as their parents did for them.

We even know who some of the elect will be in the next age, for Jesus said that some of those in torment with the rich man wanted to cross over as well.

The Trinity

Some people try to describe God as a “trinity.” This confusing description stems from three of the different ways that Christian scriptures describe the embodiment of love – Jesus, God, and the Spirit.

Rather than a trinity, a much clearer picture is seen by describing God in just two different ways: as one individual and also as infinite individuals.

To explain briefly, there is an infinite number of beings (the “from everlasting”) all of whom can call themselves “God” (individually), and they live together in sinlessness and collectively comprise what we know as the spirit.

This collective group calls itself “one God” when an individual member identifies itself to a dead spirit, a symbol of the perfect unity the member is a part of. And a christ is simply a new sinless god, the newest member of this “from everlasting” spirit, the baby as it were.

This perfect oneness of infinite members is the result of love shared without measure by all the members. Indeed, love is the eternal life sustaining force of all these members, just as blood is the life sustaining force in our physical realm.

Here are a number of other related things in hopes to make it clearer. To begin with, just as the christ Jesus had a God, so it is that Jesus’ God was once a christ and had a god, and that god was formerly a christ who had a god, ad infinitum.

Realize that everyone is going to be a christ, a savior for a world someday (their own world), if they have not already done so, or are not presently in the process.

It is true, and scripture affords this excellent proof when a christ reveals to the apostle John that the time will come when that christ will “make all things new.” The spirit then continues, saying of any who conquered (the authority of unloving spirits on their behaviors), “I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

David saw this and said, “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’”(1) Zechariah saw something similar and said “even the lame on that day shall be like David himself, and David’s house shall be like God himself.”(2)

Consider also the testimony that Jesus himself gives of his origin. When he was in spirit as one with the Infinite, he said of himself, “I am the Eternal,” and “I am from everlasting to everlasting,” and that

he has “no beginning of days and no end of days.” But when he came in the flesh, partly away from his father and mother, and the other members of the spirit, his testimony is far different.

In fact, Jesus actually rejected a compliment from a man that sincerely called him “good,” saying in reply, “Why call me good, no one is good, no one but God.”

How can he say that?

Jesus says this because when he is apart from the collective spirit, which is comprised of his father and mother, and all of the other infinite number of gods, his own righteousness only begins at the start of his new world. That is the new world they began creating when they entered the abyss to give life to the dead in the void by the power of love. (The word “they” is used to make clear this entity is spiritually “give and receive” at all times. They are also one entity that was physically “give and receive” before and especially after life in this flesh. Though this future physical form is not a thing we can comprehend very well, for the caterpillar cannot fully envision how the butterfly it will become will look, until the metamorphosis happens.)

Do you realize that you will be like your god someday? Indeed, some are so far beyond this that they no longer consider themselves anything but a member of the spirit.

Such a design for these spiritual things is easy to see in the physical framework. Just look at life itself. For example: First, a seed becomes a fetus in the womb. Then it is born an infant into a new world, but the placenta it was attached to and received nourishment from is discarded. Then that child one day becomes a parent itself, then grandparent, great-grandparent, and so on.

Likewise, love is the spiritual seed that begets goodness to grow within us, here in the womb of this earthly life. When we die here, it is simply our spiritual birth as a new child into a new world, while our body here is discarded, just as our placenta once was.

Will we also be a parent someday in that new spiritual realm? Of course. Jesus said that his father has given him all things, and that he intends to do the same for us, spiritually speaking. My own dad told me how his father found ways to bless him, and I see how my dad did the same for me. I have tried to do the same for my son, and know you have for your children. If mere mortals do this in our crippled physical realm, then how much more will our spiritual parents bless us in a place without sin!

Are we really to think that the One that calls itself the Eternal is making something into its own image for the first, last, and only time in all eternity? Of course not, and this is why Solomon said of God’s

design, “Whatever is, it has already been; whatever is to be, already is; and God is forever bringing back what disappears.”

Lastly, God himself spoke from heaven in response to Jesus telling him to glorify his name, saying, “I have glorified my name, and I will glorify it again.”(3)

Those words signify Jesus’ own spiritual children someday, as Jesus was a child to his spiritual father, though he never doubted for a moment, so the voice only benefited the dead with Jesus who heard it.

The voice also reveals a mote in God’s eye, for the “from everlasting” had no need to speak aloud to Jesus. I mention it only to show how every member of the spirit is always growing and learning. Also, it is important to note that depending on where you are spiritually, the voice could be more friend than enemy. But if you are ruled by the authority of love, such a voice has to be more demon than love. Note I said “could” be a friend earlier. Any directions to do harm to other individuals in any way is far more demon than god indeed. Compare the childish spirit of Jesus in the Old Testament instructing the Israelites to kill enemies, as opposed to the new covenant of the mature Jesus telling us to “love one another.”

A God Grows Up

David wrote of his own blessing, and also about the coming christ, saying, "You are now my son, this day I am your father."⁽¹⁾ The scriptures reveal many interesting concepts, and one of them is how young gods grow up. In physical terms it might be described as conception leading to birth, or a child becoming an adult.

When the spirit of Jesus was young and not yet fully mature, he spoke to the patriarchs, Moses, and prophets through his spirit and angels, in an effort to wake us up to the joy that could be ours. This was a joy that he possessed and considered sharing, though he understood little about it. But when he was more fully mature, and all things were ready, then he himself was sent to display the even greater wisdom of the spirit which he now much better understood, and which he now truly desired to share.

We can see the contrast between childish and mature by comparing the time of Moses against Jesus' teachings when he dwelt in the flesh. For example, the immature spirit of Jesus tells Moses, "Thou shall not kill," but then leads the Israelites in war against various inhabitants in the land of Canaan. But when the mature spirit comes in the flesh as Jesus, we are told, "Turn the other cheek" and "Love one another."

In another example, his spirit tells his prophets that "his name shall be great," and that he intends to "get glory for himself." But the mature spirit of this christ, personified in Jesus, expresses his concern for his father's name and recognition.

Here are a few of the last words in the Bible (spoken about a new age): "I will be his God and he shall be my son." This saying represents yet another cycle of lost souls who will be conceived by the spirit of love. This is also an analogy of the growth of Jesus, who passed from spiritual childhood to adulthood when he was willing to give his life for the love he believes in. He trusted in his father that by the power of the spirit of love they share in, the essence of who he is would rise again. And indeed it has, even more, for Jesus is now passing from spiritual adulthood to spiritual fatherhood, for the speaker of this quote ("I will be his God and he shall be my son") is not the christ Jesus, who has now attained the knowledge and rank this quote promises others. Rather, the speaker is a future coming christ, for John's revelations can never be applicable to those of us who are already ruled by the authority of the spirit of love. We report directly to the spirit of god within us now, so any prophecy is false.

“The old wine is good enough” is what we will rightly say if those future days appear to come to us.

It was not without reason that Jesus said it was “easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for an iota of the law to fail.” The fact is heaven and earth did pass away! The scriptures record that at the very moment Jesus died there was an earthquake and many of the dead were resurrected. But how can this be? Jesus said he was the “resurrection and life,” but the fact remains that Jesus does not rise for three days – how can the dead rise before the christ Jesus who is a first-born son of God?

The answer to how this is all possible is a difficult concept to explain, so it would be too much of a digression to talk more about it here. Succeeding chapters about time and reality will hopefully help make it clearer, but I am leaving it to the spirit to answer that question in detail, for this resurrection has to do with the spiritually dead who awoke to the living example of the future bride of the christ Jesus. Also, understand this resurrection of many of the dead was purely spiritual, for witnesses only saw apparitions.

In conclusion, we can indeed see the spirit of Jesus is growing. When he spoke to the prophets, saying, “I am always the same,” and “I never change,” he was only speaking of the virtues of the spirit which are a part of him, for love and the fruits of the spirit will always be the same. But as for himself, he will always be learning and growing, as will all of us, for growing forever is how it must be in a world where death has no power.

So the christ called Jesus, who was the son and who has become like his heavenly father, will eventually grow to see himself as just another member of the spirit, just another member of the “from everlasting.” And Jesus and his bride, and their father and mother, and their father and mother (and on and on forever) live in utter equality with absolutely no distinctions of rank or worth among members. For the virtues of the spirit of love are ultimately the only real god to all these infinite number of members of the spirit, all of whom independently possess life inherent and bear the name of “God.”

This means that real religion, the proper worship of god, is simply the practice of all of the fruits of the spirit of love with unity and goodwill towards all other life.

The Law Fails

If we look back at the old covenant law of Moses we see that a situation could arise, or a hypothetical case could be invented, by which every law would find an occasion to be righteously disregarded.

This is why David was able to eat the consecrated bread that was only lawful for the Levitical priests, and again, this is why Aaron was able to abstain from eating the high priest's sin-offering on the day two of his sons died. "The law was made for man, not man for the law."

The fact that the law of Moses might be disregarded on some occasions proves that it was fallible and destined to wear out, though it does not mean that the law was unrighteous. It simply shows that the law was only temporary, a counselor for the behavior of our dead but awakening souls during our spiritual infancy, until we were ready for adult things, namely, the law of love. This new law is brought to us by the spirit and was demonstrated by Jesus (and a multitude of others both before and since).

The concept of the law overall can be seen by comparing it to the way our physical parents set down rules for us during our youth. To disobey them usually resulted in their being angry and perhaps our getting punished as well. But when we grew older, the rules they set down were no longer needed to teach and protect us, often no longer sensible, and so they passed away having accomplished their intended purpose. So we see the law of Moses does wear out and fail in this way, for to make adults obey childhood rules would be wrong indeed.

Jesus said, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for an iota of the law to lapse." This is true of course, but understand that Jesus is not saying it cannot happen, only how difficult it would be. This is important because several of these laws were on the verge of failing, owing to the spiritual growth of some of the people. A few of these laws would have failed very soon if Jesus had not come to end the childhood rule of the law by giving us the adult covenant of love, that lasts forever.

Of all the rules in the law which were close to wearing out and thereby failing, there is one that stands out all alone. This is the rule about divorce. This is the statute in which Moses permitted a man to divorce his wife by simply giving her a letter of dismissal.

The Pharisees saw this weakness too, and so they tried to trap Jesus by asking him his opinion on this rule, hoping he would agree with it.

But Jesus rebuked them since it was never his will, saying, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives on account of the hardness of your hearts, but it was not so from the beginning.” Then continuing, he stated, “I tell you, whoever divorces his wife except for adultery and marries another woman, commits adultery.”

Other laws were also close to being outgrown, and therefore passing away, since Jesus shows us a better way than Moses ever understood on many points. But the law on divorce had failed, spiritually speaking.

That something in the law should fail spiritually is a landmark moment for us. It represents Adam and Eve (or any other true husband and wife) having their first real spark of forgiveness for each other since their fall and separation. In short, it represents their first real growth of love for each other. Seriously considering forgiveness, they actually accepted each other again as equals, for a moment. Baby’s first steps, as it were.

This is the reason Jesus came when he did.

Mistakes

The spirit of love within us is our guide. It helps us interpret what is right and wrong behavior, and we somehow inherently understand we should try to be guided by this inner voice of love. Occasionally, we really do not know how to behave, and in these cases it is best to treat others as we would like to be treated if the situation was reversed. But no one who is acceptant of other entities has ever been perfect in everything they have ever done.

Some say Jesus never sinned during his entire life in the flesh. This is a meaningless debate, for the statement is both true and false, depending on how one looks at Jesus.

Sin is a difficult concept to describe with words, but it is basically an intentional mistake which affects someone else's spirituality negatively.

Also very hard to put into words is the concept of sinlessness. From the standpoint of sinlessness being true for a person, it begins by repentance of sin and acceptance of the authority of love. When this change of heart is combined with true forgiveness by all the victims of that sinner, the result is a further cleansing of the mind and soul of that person, which is as sinless as any eternally growing entity can be.

So we could honestly say that Jesus is sinless now, for there are no longer any legitimate charges against him, which is a claim that not one of us still here in the flesh can make.

However, this is very different than saying Jesus had nothing to learn. The fact is, Jesus had a lot to learn, and always will have. Since he lives forever, he will always be growing. Do babies know how to walk immediately? Of course not, and neither do newborn spiritual babies (believers), nor does a newborn sinless child (christ). The point I am making here is that any life entity can make mistakes unintentionally, even unknowingly. This is an action that is sinless, yet incorrect, since the one who performed it is still learning. A good physical example would be a baby falling while trying to walk, or accidentally dropping something. Even adults occasionally make these errors, and the same physical principle applies to the spiritual realm.

In other words, since Jesus is growing, he will sometimes find that there was another course of action that would have been better to take on some particular matter, a course that he was unable to comprehend from the spirits that were his instructors at the time he made it. This is similar to how the spirit of Jesus spoke to Moses, but Moses was

simply unable to understand all he was told. But Jesus never turned aside from the true way like we know Moses did on at least one point.

It is not just because Moses was rebuked by Jesus for his statute on divorce that makes this one law stand out. The preceding paragraphs about “mistakes” were to prepare for a discussion about an astounding revelation that the scriptures record; namely, “For your sins your mother was divorced.”(1)

There are a number of meanings in this parable. One is that the mother is represented by Jacob, who symbolizes the head of the people in his day. The saying “your sins” refers to the exasperation of the spirit of Jesus with the wrongdoing of Jacob’s offspring, the nation of Israel in Moses’ day. But it would only be right if Jacob were divorced for his own sins. Here is a huge mistake by the spirit of Jesus.

However, we cannot discount the love that Jesus revealed to those of us who were dead in our selfishness, just because the scriptures reveal that he is growing and made many mistakes. For recall the sharp rebuke that was given to his accuser, who taunted Jesus after his resurrection for having prophesized about some of his elders in another day and age. This still dead demon insults him, saying, “Then what are these scars on your hands?” implying Jesus was rightly crucified as a criminal. But the spirit humiliates this satan with a very sharp rebuke, for Jesus answers, “I got them in my harlot’s house.”(2) (Many translations render the word “harlot” as “friend.” Neither word quite fits, though the lesson is not completely lost with either one. The original word was closer to meaning a promiscuous acquaintance, not a prostitute, not a friend.)

This accuser he rebukes is in fact the harlot herself, still a satan, who invited him in but did not love him. Fueled by hatred, she demanded his death for his part in their mistake, though their involvement was also an error on her part. The case is plain that she was also guilty. Though Jesus did not love her like a wife, she did not love him like a husband either. And while the word “harlot” reveals and helps us understand this particular mistake the spirit of Jesus made, never forget the unsurpassed love he demonstrated as a christ, a love greater than ever before witnessed by people at our age level of spiritual understanding. True to his calling, while she and his other murderers were rejoicing over his death, he actually invoked the Eternal’s blessing on them, saying, “Forgive them Father, they know not what they do.”

With these words he passed judgment on himself, and the verdict was life. Jesus lives to this very day and always will.

Judas

David foresaw the spirit of Jesus cursing the spirit of Judas. He wrote of this: "It is not the taunts of a foe – that I could bear; it is not an enemy's insolence – then I could hide from him. No, you are an equal of my own, my close companion and trusted friend." Then continuing, he says, "Sweet was our fellowship together in the house of God [meaning their friendship together on earth]. May he go to perdition. Death seize all such. May they go living to the world below, swept off as their sins deserve. For he laid hands upon his friends, profaning friendship's bonds."

Because of this and other misunderstood scriptures, most ministers preach that Judas suffered damnation. However, they are wrong, for clearly the scriptures show us that Judas is a man who found salvation.

First, the scriptures record that Judas repented. This we know must eventually bring salvation. Second, the spirit of Jesus plainly says of him, "you are an equal of my own."

This is one reason why the spirit inspires Isaiah to prophesy these profound questions: "Who is as blind as my servant, as deaf as my messenger? Who is as blind as my devotee, as blind as the Eternal's servant?"(1) These questions are not just directed to the Israelites, but are in fact parable questions asked directly of Jesus himself, and also asked of those of us who believe his message about the authority of love.

Foremost, the questions are parables to all people not ruled by love, many of whom lie to themselves by insisting that most of their problems and sufferings are caused by external forces. The truth is, except on rare occasions, a person's serious sorrows are all their own doing. And on those few occasions when they are not, they seem to forget that the spirit will more than find a way to make up for it. Furthermore, how does an occasional accidental scratch from the spirit compare to the patience of this same spirit that has endured so many of our murderous thoughts coming to life? Did we not once proclaim ourselves equal to and even above the From Everlasting? Yes, on rare occasions we are equal (behave perfectly), but we declared such wisdom our standard behavior. The tail wags the dog, we childishly insisted.

The questions are also a parable for Jesus himself, who while dying on the cross, asks, "My God, My God, why desert me? Why do my cries of anguish bring no help?" For after crying out loud with his

question, he soon cries out again with the answer, this time in spirit, saying, "I am a mere worm and not a man." (2) This is a revelation for him, and for us.

Formerly, the worm is what Satan was when sin was conceived in us, but now Jesus is the worm conceiving the rejection of sin. (The "worm" is an analogy for the spiritual equivalent of physical semen in both cases.)

Now remember, the spirit plainly tells us that Jesus and Judas are equals. Does this mean that Jesus has sinned? No, but it does reveal an astounding truth that Jesus does not realize until just as he is dying – that to look at Judas is to have seen the essence of his former self – for Judas is a man exactly like himself under a different set of circumstances.

Jesus said that he picked Judas "that the scriptures might be fulfilled," but what does this really mean? For although the scriptures say that Jesus called Judas "the son of perdition," the fact of the matter is that anyone who has not repented from sin and submitted to the authority of love is a son of perdition.

And who exactly is this man named Jesus? Spiritually he was the "Son of David." David was a murderer and adulterer! No wonder Isaiah asks, "Is anyone as blind as the Eternal's servant?"

And who is as blind as David? David curses in the spirit of Jesus, saying about Judas: "May he go to perdition. Death seize all such. May he go living to the world below... For he laid hands upon his friends, profaning friendship's bonds." David never realizes (at the time) that these words of Jesus about Judas would be the very same words as Uriah's about himself! (3) Talk about blind! Yet David's repentance was so great that he found forgiveness – just like Judas.

Jesus also said of Judas, "woe unto him by whom the son of man is betrayed," and again, "better for that man had he never been born."

This has to do with Judas' spiritual birth, not physical, for Jesus foresaw the impossible reconciliation Judas would have between his deed and his conscious. Some men could have ignored their guilt, kept the money, and gone on to prosper for the remainder of the age. But not Judas, he repented, and immediately at that.

And what of the last words Jesus spoke to Judas? He said, "Be quick with what you have to do." Did Judas have a choice, or was he prepared for the occasion as Jesus was?

Among the many revelations about Judas, particularly in the book of Zechariah, this one is amazing: "The hucksters who had hired me knew that this was by order of the Eternal. I said to them, If you think it right, give me my wages, but if not – never mind. So they paid out

thirty pieces of silver. The Eternal said to me, Put it into the treasury, that splendid sum with which they paid you off.”

Understand, I am not claiming Judas’ betrayal was right, I am simply saying Judas is a man that found salvation.

David’s blindness and immaturity, indeed Jesus’ as well, show themselves in other ways, for remember David’s curse in the spirit of Jesus that his betrayer should die and his house be left desolate. Not that such an indictment is undeserved; it is just that David, again, never seems to consider his own shortcomings – for again, these would be the very words of Uriah’s against David! With those words he passed judgment on himself.

But God is slower to anger, for when David praises the Eternal, saying of God’s enemies, “I hate them with a perfect hatred, I count them as enemies to myself,” the spirit immediately rebukes him. The very next words David is moved to speak are these: “Search me, O God, and know my heart, test me and try my thoughts; see if I am taking a wrong course...” (4)

And the Eternal did indeed illuminate his heart, and corrected these wrong courses, and David learned to be merciful when he could. And of course, Jesus shines far beyond this, sharing with us the message that love is above all else, and demonstrating this very thing in a way almost beyond our ken, actually asking God’s forgiveness of his murderers – even before he was dead by their hands. Amazing!

The scriptures record that after Jesus was arrested, “Then Judas his betrayer saw he was condemned, and repented; he brought back the thirty pieces to the high priests and elders, saying, “I did wrong in betraying innocent blood.” Here we see that Judas repented, and though repentance might not stop a punishment, it absolutely must bring forgiveness in the end.

In fact, though the scriptures record the obvious hostility the other apostles held for him, certain facts cannot be ignored, for though Judas betrayed Jesus first, it remains that all the apostles betrayed him.

But what did Judas do? Here was a man so broken over his role in Jesus’ death that he could not bear to live any longer. So he immediately killed himself that he might stand before God at once to beg for mercy and forgiveness. And this he set out to do before Jesus had even died. Such was the shame he felt at his behavior. But all the apostles, indeed all of mankind, were guilty of letting Jesus die unjustly. For the scriptures record this prophecy: “The time to free my folk had come, I looked but there was none to help, I was amazed that there was none to aid; so my own power gained me victory.”

In short, the actions of Judas were no worse than the other apostles, for they too were guilty. We simply cannot disregard the facts that indicate some final merit on Judas' behalf. Divorced for deeds he did not commit, one might also inquire who represents Jacob in all of these things!

Indeed, though Judas betrayed Jesus first, all of the apostles abandon him to his death – except Judas! He is the only person in the entire world defending Jesus in his darkest hour, the only one trying to stop what is about to happen. Having repented of his actions, he went back to the high priests and elders, saying, “I did wrong in betraying innocent blood,” but they rejected his plea and said, “That is your affair, not ours.” In fact, both Jesus and Judas hung on a tree so to speak, and both died at the same time. And while this does picture the separation of good and evil, it also symbolizes their unity, for Jesus said of Judas, through David, “you are an equal of my own.”

Despite the many arguments that could be engaged in studying these facts, here is the bottom line: Judas found salvation.

As a final note, here is an answer to Isaiah's parable questions of “Who is as blind as my servant, as deaf as my messenger: Who is as blind as the Eternal's devotee, as blind as the Eternal's servant?”

The answer is that no one was as blind as Jesus. The mistakes he made that are revealed as he grows up before our eyes are proof he had much to learn. But typical of some parables, the meaning runs deep, for the reason the others questioned are not as blind as Jesus is because they see even less. The elect are blinder because of sin and the lost even more so, since their very light is darkness.

Satan

Why does the spirit of Jesus, speaking in the Old Testament, call Satan the “shining star of the dawn,” but when Jesus comes in the flesh he calls himself the “bright star of the morning”?

Because the dawn always becomes morning is the answer. This is one of the things Jesus meant when he said, “If any house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand,” and again, “If Satan rises against Satan, then his kingdom comes to an end.” This saying from Jesus speaks of his own past.

This makes perfect sense when we think about it. We are trying to separate ourselves from the evil influences within us, and if we hold out faithfully until the end, then with the spirit’s help we will have accomplished that division, thereby crossing over into eternal life. This is why Peter told us to hold on faithfully until “the day dawns, and the day star rises within your hearts.”

This is delightful good news. Again, the dawn always grows into morning with its vastly greater light. Since Jesus is giving us all that is his (just as his father did for him), the only possible conclusion is that we who follow the christ Jesus are satans desiring to change our selfish ways. After all, it was on Earth that we were created, and it was to Earth that Satan fell in the beginning.

These things are in agreement with the scriptures, but far more importantly, they are also in perfect agreement with our hearts if we are honest with ourselves. The truth is that we must stand in disgrace to look back on the way we once acted and thought. Indeed, even having repented, we would be humiliated if others could hear some of the thoughts with which our hearts are so often occupied.

No wonder Jesus rebuked Peter so sharply for saying “God forbid,” when Jesus told him that he (Jesus) was going to die very soon. For Peter, though he loved Jesus, was still double-minded and uncommitted to endure the cost of changing his heart, whatever form it might take, and so he hoped that Jesus might somehow fail as a christ. And what was that sharp rebuke of Jesus to his friend Peter? Namely this, “Get behind me you Satan.”

Understanding what we are, and the emptiness from which we were first made, helps us better understand our life and the events within it as we grow. For all of the patriarchs and apostles held that the next life was even better, and genuinely accepted the close of their lives here, looking forward to leaving this prison and entering the true life to come.

Note that I use the word prison to make clear that this life we have now, some of it very joyful, is as angry as a loving parent gets with his wayward children.

Prophecy

The spirit of Jesus says in the Old Testament, in speaking of the coming age: "If anyone still prophecies, then the father and mother who bore him shall tell him, you must die, for in the name of the Eternal you are speaking lies."(1)

The reason why prophecy must die is because the spirit is given to all of us. Therefore we all have access to the same information. In the spiritual realm, equality of all members partaking in the spirit of love is a constant reality. So if we prophecy about another member of the spirit, in essence to declare their future to them, then we have placed ourselves above an equal. Such an attempted fortune telling, as if they were a dead object instead of another living being, is not only speaking lies, but wickedly conceited.

That kind of sinless world is what this age is supposed to try to be like, so how can we ever prophecy about our brother or sister and not incur some sort of guilt? (Note that prophecies are different than revelations, which are given to aid us occasionally.) The elect absolutely reject new prophecy and strive only to develop the fruits of the spirit that do not wear out and perish from one age to the next.

For the spiritually dead, the self-centered prophecies of a child can come to life and hold some truth of the future. However, the past few paragraphs help explain why some people rightly reject almost everything about the christ named Jesus. They had already taken "love one another" to heart, or will by some other example, so all prophecies concerning Jesus, even the true ones, are meaningless to them. Jesus understood those people who had already taken love to heart by the time he made his appearance in the flesh, and never once wickedly tried to force those childish boasts from his youth on anyone. "The old wine is good enough," is what Jesus said about the people that rightly rejected him as their lord.

Playing God

About Job and the tragedies that befell him, God said to Satan, “It was idle of you to entice me to undo him.”

However, in another place, the scriptures contradict that God would ever do such a thing, for they say, “It is impossible for God to be tempted by evil.” Can we resolve what looks to be God having been tempted to cruel and unjust behavior? We cannot, though we can understand what transpired.

What happened to Job, (the description that follows is not complete, but is the best I can express), is that the essence of who he once was had a conversation with the essence of who he eventually became. The talk was about himself at a stage of his growth that was after one age, but before the other, though he did not know it at any time during these phases. In short, Job past and Job future were discussing Job present. Note that all three stages are past now.

Another perspective in describing these events, seemingly different, but essentially not, (again my expression of these facts is not complete), is that the spirit of Job’s bride was unknowingly having a conversation with her exact same self about him. Unlike my previous example, she is at the same level of spiritual development in both dimensions, though she does not know she is talking to herself in either dimension. Nor did she yet comprehend Job was her twin spirit and soul mate in either of these perspectives.

If we merge these two descriptions of the events we begin to form a clearer picture of what took place. We also see that a god certainly can be tempted by evil.

However, do not think it was anyone but Job and his beloved conscience who were primarily responsible for his problems. In short, the satan in him along with the god in him were both jealous and prideful over his wealth, position, and character, which provoked them to the point where they hurt themselves in an effort to be regarded as better than the other.

Happily, only love has any lasting influence, so Job and his beloved eventually emerged wiser from these accidental self-inflicted wounds.

Time Does Not Exist

Time does not exist to the sinless because they live eternally and have life inherent. Time is simply a result of sin, used as a means of measuring things by mankind. In fact, to anyone without sin, time itself can actually be molded as if it were clay, for anything without life can be molded in any way sinlessness desires.

Just as good and evil are opposite, and life and death opposite as well, so it is that eternity and time are opposite. So time is lifeless by its very nature, and as such, is utterly meaningless to the sinless.

Another way to understand that time is only real to the sinful is to realize that today is actually still the seventh day in the week of creation, the Sabbath day when God rested.

The term “day” as used in the story in the book of Genesis that describes our creation is strictly a metaphor pertaining to phases of our growth. The story is now so altered from its oral origin and retellings in the subsequent writing and rewritings that most of its meaningful information is long gone. However, it is interesting to note that Jesus said he would rebuild his temple in 3 days. Since Jesus and his bride are twins spiritually, it would be fair to conclude that she would also be using the same metaphor of 3 days. Therefore, at their rapture/reunion into one again, their new world will have been created in 6 days.

Recall what Adam and Eve were told about the tree of knowledge of good and evil: “On the day you eat from it you will surely die.” This death was spiritual, not physical, for Adam and Eve lived for years after they sinned (as we think of time), and mankind itself still lives. Therefore, we can be sure that today is still that same seventh day on which God rested. In fact, it is still virtually the same instant we sinned.

It was for good reason that Jesus chose these words to question his adversaries who criticized him for working on the Sabbath: “Which of you if his sheep falls into a pit will not immediately lift it out on the Sabbath?” And, again, he said, “My father has continued working to this hour, so I work too.” So we see that though God was resting he immediately came to our rescue when we fell into the pit of sin, just as any mother and father would immediately rise up to the sudden anguished cries of their child.

Different Realities

When people ask for something by which the spirit is moved, but the requests are in some way in conflict with each other, one possible result is that different realities come to exist in the same place and at the same time.

For example, two people could stand next to each other looking out over the horizon, and one of them might see pouring rain while the other sees only sunshine. If they talk about the weather, both of them will hear conversation fitting to their own perceptions. This is not some conscious or unconscious telling of lies to each other, but rather it is two souls accepting each other's right to coexistence with some heartfelt differences between them.

Different realities may also come to exist when the spirit is protecting one soul from accidentally or intentionally injuring another. And there are other reasons for such things to happen, as well. Furthermore, not only does the spirit allow such things to happen, they happen frequently, though we seldom see it.

Nevertheless, when we begin to understand the incredible power of the spirit, we realize that such things not only could happen, but that they must happen. The spirit never kills any good thing.

When God asks, "Is anything too hard for me?" and Jesus tells us "All things are possible for them that believe," then we can be sure that if the creator of heaven and earth really wants it, then the spirit will handle such a small thing as the weather. This same spirit will also act as guardian and interpreter to protect against the confusion that would result from one person's requests or hopes interfering with someone else's. However, if we want someone else's will to affect our own reality, such as a prayer for healing, then the parties involved may both see a new mutual reality.

More important are genuine thoughts of good will towards us from others, which sometimes not only affect our physical reality, but may bring us joy and even help transform our spirits. It is no small blessing when someone feels affection for us, and when others are moved to hope good things happen to us for no other reason except that they like us, we are blessed indeed.

Because of its very nature, examples of different realities in the same place at the same time are rarely recorded in the scriptures, but there are a few. For instance, at Pentecost many saw tongues of fire and heard the triumphs of God in foreign languages, but others heard only gibberish. Then at a later date, when Paul is rebuked for his

persecution of believers, the spirit of Jesus appears to him in the form of a blinding light to speak to him. However, Paul's companions see nothing at all, though they hear the voice as Paul does. And Stephen saw Jesus in heaven, but his murderers saw nothing and only shrieked that he was a blasphemer as they stoned him in a jealous rage.

Yet another excellent example of different realities happening concurrently is shown by what Jesus said about the rapture of the believing. When he is asked about those people, "Where will they be taken?" Jesus replied, "Where the carcass is the vultures gather." (1) So these people stayed right where they were and simply crossed directly into the spiritual kingdom, having left the flesh behind.

Clearly then, a spiritual realm (paradise) exists right here in the same place we are, we just cannot see it very well because of our nature.

"The meek shall inherit the earth," Jesus said. And though it will not be the same world we know now, recall that it was here on earth where paradise was to begin with.

The Bride of Christ

Jesus said that John the Baptist was a better man than any other who had ever lived, while John the Baptist said of himself that he was not even fit to untie the strap on Jesus' sandal. Who then is the actual bride of the christ Jesus? And what does she look like, since scriptures record by way of parables that she is Jacob, the planet earth, and also the New Jerusalem from heaven?

The direct answer is that each of us is our own christ's bride, and vice versa. And as to the appearance of the bride, she looks the same as the groom – spiritually speaking.

Every pair of members that are joined into one physical body (arms, legs, eyes, etcetera) are always essentially identical twins. Likewise, the marriage of the christ Jesus is to an equal.

Interestingly, in paradise, the next age, heaven – whatever you prefer to call it – whenever Jesus and his bride behold each other, they appear to each other as either male or female, constantly shifting to whatever opposite gender they feel like at the moment. There is no thinking about this and it is not even noticed by them, for they do not regard it as meaningful. This happens because they share everything they are completely. Understand they are one entity, one being.

In a sense, they give control of each other to each other, subject to love, because of love.

What this means is that Jesus and his bride are to be married into one body that is equally male and female, equally give and receive. A better word for this kind of marriage is actually "reunited," but this time the union's conscience will be ruled by love instead of self.

This "one body" of equal parts give and receive is the physical example of the spiritual principle of the sinless having life inherent. And the one physical and spiritual body that they comprise is only a part of the greater spiritual body that they comprise with their father and mother, who are themselves but a part of the even greater body of the spirit itself.

They must be equally give and receive. For Jesus and his bride, while they are as one body and spirit with each other, and as one spirit with everyone else ruled by love, they nevertheless receive as much as they give. Because in their case, they give more to their children than they receive, while they receive more from their parents who are also gods than they give to them; and between themselves, the giving and receiving is equal.

Every individual sinless spiritual body has eternal life inherently and is give and receive in equal proportions.

Equality and the Sexes

Our physical bodies testify to God's desire for equality between the sexes. Just look at our own bodies to see the obvious evidence. Every pair of twin members is essentially equal: Arms, legs, eyes, ears, all basically the same, yet joined together into one body. This is a good analogy for what God wanted Adam and Eve to accomplish and is one of the reasons why he said that the two are to become "one flesh," though fulfillment of this is only possible through the spirit.

Unbelievers and spiritually immature people look at their physical uniqueness as compared to the other gender, then try to reason that they have the better temple. But this kind of attitude always proves ruinous to a marriage, since equality is absolutely required for harmony. Jesus said, "The flesh profits nothing."

Jesus also said that a husband and wife are to become "one flesh." Obviously then, the male also becomes female, and the female also becomes male. A physical example of this is plainly seen in the way every child resembles both of its parents, regardless of its gender.

If we think about the creation of Adam and Eve, the only conclusion about equality is that they were equal from the start. Different in some ways, yes, but that Eve had to have been Adam's equal becomes clear after reflecting on the matter, for there Adam stood – unhappy in Paradise!

How can that be? God was there, as was a multitude of other creatures, yet Adam was not satisfied. This is because he had no one just like himself to be with; an equal was needed. When Adam was alone in the world, his Creator had more abilities than he had, and was also capable of giving more to him than he could receive or return in response. Likewise, all of the animals had lesser abilities than Adam had, and Adam was capable of giving more to the animals than they could receive, or return to him in response. This eventually caused Adam to feel a lack of satisfaction and fulfillment. But Eve solved the problem completely. Here was a being that could receive everything he could give. And not only would that be exactly enough for her, she could return just as much as she was given.

So we see that Eve allows Adam to have a companion with equal total abilities, instead of forever being inferior or superior in total abilities to every other being. Moreover, she ended his feeling of aloneness, since she was clearly and undeniably like himself. Also, and this is very important, Eve provided Adam with a feeling of identity in the midst of infinity, a reference point, so to speak. This is

very noteworthy, for “I am” may be the core of what we were given, the essence of original thought, but eventually one asks: “What am I?” and in their union Adam and Eve behold their ever-changing, never-changing answer.

About husband and wife, an enlightened scripture also says, “No man ever hated his own flesh.” If we really think about this, the only conclusion is that a person’s true mate is exactly what they would be if they were that sex. After all, God did exactly this for Adam, and he does not do any less for his loved ones today – if only we let him, for he is infinitely capable of finding a way to get the right two people together. In fact, most of us do marry the person God wanted us to, but our sinful natures blind us to this truth; and the curses we utter against our mate is actually testimony against ourselves.

What has Jesus told us about equality? Just the entire truth with a single question: “Can two walk together except they be agreed?” Therefore, regarding marriage, we need to understand that our closest companion and dearest friend can accept us believing that they are a little different, but never that we believe they are a little inferior.

Now if a man and a woman are supposed to join together and become “one flesh,” then how much more appropriate would it be for the man and woman to join together into one spirit? The answer is, very appropriate, and this is exactly what God wanted Adam and Eve to do. After all, the Creator himself is spirit, and he is as One spirit with all the Living. Jesus himself said, “I and the Father are One.” This is spiritual Oneness, not physical, and it is the same way that Jesus wants us to be with him. Jesus and the Father are not one flesh though, and neither are we with Jesus. But a man and a woman are as one flesh, so if any two should ever be as one spirit, it would have to be those who are also one flesh as well!

The point of all this is that two sinless beings who were literally perfectly matched for each other did not just look at each other, then go on their separate ways without reacting. Rather, like two magnets of opposite attractions, they saw each other and leapt for joy, immediately locking together in spiritual intercourse. We can be sure they began growing into one spiritual body composed of the two from the very moment they met; their spirits literally transforming their flesh, as he who was spiritually give and receive (and physically give), combined with her who was spiritually give and receive (and physically receive). The purpose of it all being that they should learn about love and its two directions, namely give and receive; and at the same time, to be each other’s true companion – so much so that they are literally the missing part of each other!

Earlier, I noted how our individual bodies show God's desire for equality, since every pair of twin members are essentially equal. Notice also, that the single members are always at or near the center, shared by each side and linking the two halves into one complete body.

This growing together into one perfect spiritual body, with equal and perfectly matched halves sharing all the unique single members between them, was exactly the transformation that Adam and Eve's spiritual intercourse created within them. It transformed them physically, too, since sinless spiritual giving makes the flesh anything it wants, and what these two reflections of each other wanted was oneness. No doubt this new being of the two become as one spirit and one flesh, in addition to their individual identities, far surpassed their separate abilities and differed vastly from the flesh we know today.

Now at some point after Adam and Eve were completely as one with each other (probably incalculably long after they were), they wondered what would happen if they ate from the tree of knowledge (a parable), and so the temptation came to them and they eagerly accepted. The fact is, they both did exactly what they wanted, then with their new nature already in place, stood there and lied to their God by blaming their deeds on another.

The result of their sin is that they immediately began to grow apart, actually tearing apart, because their new nature was completely self-centered. Instead of sharing everything in total oneness, they now possessed the unique members individually, like before they came together without sin in the beginning. But now the flesh was deformed and defective.

What would the original sinless bodies of Adam and Eve have looked like compared to the bodies we have now? This is unknown, and unimportant, but that they were different is certain. The original bodies were created by sinless God, but the new bodies we now inhabit were the result of the one body they had become being torn in two by sin.

Imagine if your own body was waging a war for possession of your single members, the right and left halves struggling furiously for sole possession of the single central pieces like the heart, stomach, and liver, and all the other single pieces that are now shared equally. What incredible damage would be done to you as your sides tore these members away in selfishness. Imagine if the body you have now was torn in two down the middle from groin to head. What abilities would either of the two leftover pieces have compared to your whole body? This is exactly what Adam and Eve did to each

other after they sinned, leaving each other with a mere shadow of the body they once shared.

As a consequence of this, the unique members were no longer shared equally in between the two of them as one body. The most noticeable of these single members are the two faces of love, give and receive, and the physical counterparts to these two members are mainly the reproductive systems. Now instead of sharing them though, their new nature of self-centeredness led them to fight to keep these single members all to themselves. When the fight to possess these members was finally over, Eve possessed the receive, and consequently Adam was left possessing the give.

Eve prevailed in this battle, not because she was formed with physical receive at creation, (remember they had become as one body and both were spiritually give first), but rather, she possessed the receive because she was slightly more selfish, since she had been corrupted by sin for a slightly longer period of time.

But this is not a thing of shame for women because Eve sinned first only because she was tempted first. This is certain, for both Adam and Eve were of the very same flesh, and both had the same sinless spirit within them. In fact, if Adam had been tempted first, then he would have sinned first and possessed the receive, consequently becoming the female as they tore apart from the oneness they had become.

But the physical damage is not the real damage, at least by comparison. The real disaster is what it represents, namely spiritual damage. This is because not only were they separated from being as one body and spirit with each other, they were also separated from being as one spirit with God and the infinite collective combined spirit, the “from everlasting to everlasting.” In choosing sin they were cut off from all of this.

There was other profound damage between Adam and Eve. Now, instead of clothing one another with each other, so to speak, they were apart, and unable to rejoin because they were filled with sin, (except in a minimal physical way, which is almost nothing by comparison). No wonder they were ashamed of their nakedness. God, who moves as One, was about to behold them who had also been as one, but who were not any longer. Even worse, since they sinned, they were no longer as one with the spirit either. The multitude of catastrophic changes in their now separate bodies was shameful evidence that all had been lost in a moment.

Though we cannot be certain of the details, a mere look at our bodies indicates a host of things gone wrong. For example, men and women are generally mismatched in size and strength. How can this

be? The spirit has said that a husband and wife are to be “one flesh,” but the flesh is meant to be equal halves, with all the unique single members in the center to be equally shared by each half. But this physical inequality has not resulted from God’s desire to shame or punish women, but rather to serve as witness that any victory in sin (fighting to possess receive) will result in a loss. However, women incur no permanent disadvantage in generally having less physical size and strength than men, since the flesh ultimately profits nothing. Furthermore, there is never any shame in it, for the spirit shows us that Eve only did what Adam would have done if he had been tempted first.

The bodies we have now bear signs of a host of other things gone astray, not least of which is that the unique single members cannot be shared (except in the most minimum way, which provides little real insight to our mate’s unique perspective).

Even worse, who could fail to notice that the bodies we have now often become ill or diseased? Ultimately, they fail miserably. In other words, we die. Death is the most profound symbol of sin that we know, and that we have absolutely no hope in the flesh is understood by all.

Next, consider the incredible mind Adam and Eve had. They communicated with everyone, whatever their position, whether it was God or any of the many other creatures they shared earth with. This was done more easily than we now talk person to person. To say that we are now mentally handicapped by comparison is an incredible understatement, for the reduction in our mental faculties is like being in a coma compared to what they shared.

And what of the glorious countenance they possessed. Moses, who was a sinner like us, literally had his face aglow after talking to the lord. Adam and Eve, without sin, and who talked face to face with God every day, would have been absolutely radiant. Like pure sunlight, Adam and Eve shone quite literally like stars!

What do we have now? We perspire, urinate, and defecate. This is a long way from emitting light!

Excretions of these kinds were forbidden in the presence of the spirit of the lord under the old law, and as such, are proof that they either did not exist, or were something different than what they are now. These are just a few of the many things in our physical framework that show we are out of line with spiritual perfection, though everything that is speaks parables to us from which to learn things.

But there is one more thing that needs discussing since it is so remarkable, namely, that women menstruate. This kind of bleeding

does not exist in a sinless world, since the old law declares women defiled whenever they had their periods. This is a profound symbol of two things. First, that Adam and Eve literally tore themselves apart in self-centeredness. Second, it represents sin. But not the woman's sin, it represents the children's (serpent's) sin.

This can be seen by noting the fact that most women have their periods approximately in time with the lunar cycle. But in an amazing parable, the lord pictures the man Jacob as a woman with the moon under her feet,(1) This symbolizes sin having been utterly conquered. In other words, "our enemies made a footstool for our feet," as David foresaw and recorded in the song book called Psalms. And Jacob as a woman symbolizes the unity of man and woman at the same time as sin is done away with.

All of these examples having been given, we can see clearly that today's bodies are not like the original bodies of Adam and Eve, and they are profoundly less than the glorious combined body they once shared without sin. Nevertheless, our currently damaged physical bodies still retain a symbol of give for man, and one of receive for woman, at opposite places. Why is this? Again, because give and receive are the two sides of love and completely equal in value.

Some arrogant men will be quick to twist the rebuke Jesus once gave to a woman, when he asked, "Is it not better to give than to receive?" But those who do are far astray. It was a question, not a statement of fact. The question Jesus posed was an inspired response, designed to silence the arrogance of a female who clearly hoped that being a woman was superior to being a man, but knew in her heart it was not. The truth is that one gender is as good as another.

If you doubt this, and think that give is somehow superior to receive, consider that receive is a must for fulfillment, since how could you give if no one will receive it? Furthermore, the receive must be equal to the give or dissatisfaction begins on the part of the one who is giving. Also, remember that true give, gives completely, even the ability to give is given. Anything less than that and receive begins to be dissatisfied. This unlimited giving and receiving explains how Adam and Eve could be one flesh, since their sharing was totally complete at all times, given back and forth by their spirits without sin, however their hearts desired. Knowing this is a key to understanding the parables of rejecting the equality of give and receive that are called "the worm that does not die" and "the fire that is never quenched."(2)

Love and reason both conclude that Adam and Eve, while slightly different than each other, are in no ways inferior to the other.

That “give” is explained before “receive,” when a spark of love tried to explain itself to the dead, is all that was ever righteous in the old law of Moses when talking about the gender split that resulted from our fall into sin.

Here is an analogy to explain that another way: If we are dead (standing still) and come to life (begin to move), then one day we will walk. When we try to explain what has happened, we will have to describe how one leg moved first – but both legs are equal! One leg was faithful and trusting in allowing the other to guide it for a moment, while the other was faithful and trusting in having to stand alone for a moment, keeping its word to deliver the other leg to its intended destination, which then reset itself bearing half the weight again. So we begin to walk, spiritually speaking.

Now we could continue to move in such a fashion, stopping and starting in the same order, over and over, but it soon becomes apparent that walking is much easier if we simply share the leading and following. But all of this is a simple physical example, for in the next age we will be as one with our beloved conscience, simply translating ourselves wherever our heart desires. This behavior, when joined in the spirit of love to other life entities is the beginning of our own omnipresence and omniscience.

It is important to remember that women also bear symbols of give. Breasts generally serve no purpose for a man, so does this mean that men do not give to children, or that women give more? Not at all, they only symbolize who generally goes first in giving to children. Again, this is when the spiritual tries to explain itself to the physical, manifesting examples of itself as best it can in what little remains of our former structure.

But all of these things are dead now, for the old covenant, physical in design, has been replaced by the new covenant, which is completely spiritual in design. This is proved by the spirit being given to any who will accept it, and any women in the spirit will most assuredly give first to a man still rejecting the authority of love. But then again, giving love first is not really love if it does not allow equality. True love always allows equality, regardless of who started. In fact, true love forgets who started. It simply does not care!

Common sense alone shows us our best friend has to be slightly different. Only you can be you. Only I can be me. The moral of all this is, stop insisting a little bit different is a little bit inferior. We cannot ever find happiness by insisting our mate is somehow inferior to our own self. Such an attitude cannot long be hidden from one’s beloved, and any one of us would be inconsolably grieved to hear our very own soul mate call us a subordinate. Again, Jesus has revealed

the entire truth with a single question: “Can two walk together unless they be agreed?” Surely this makes sense. If the two are to be as “one flesh,” how will it be if one half is inferior? Picture an entire body with one arm shorter, one eye dimmer, one ear deafer – what a hardship that would be. If one leg is shorter than the other, how will they walk together in agreement?

Now I ask another question – answer it honestly: Who among us has not wondered what it would be like to be the opposite sex? Not like some of the young take to heart, but rather in a way led by the spirit, so we could really know what each other’s unique differences are like? That would be great. What a terrific gift, to let your companion experience your unique temple. (More accurately, I could say “experience the other side of their temple.”) Still, there exists an even better gift, the actual sharing of each other’s minds. Wow! These are amazing things, yet none are as great as the best gift of all, the one that was given to us all, for all of these things are the result of us having been given love, the power and gift of life itself.

Lastly, look at some truly profound scriptures, things that are difficult to comprehend mentally and harder to explain with words. First, what does the spirit mean when it says, “Ask now and inquire, if ever a man is with child...what day is like it? An hour of travail for Jacob; but he shall come through it.”(3) A true prophecy also foretells that “frail woman becomes manly.” Even more amazing is the revelation vision that a christ gave to the apostle John, showing Jacob as a woman giving birth to a christ.

There are a lot of meanings in these parables, but I am moved to let the reader solve these cornerstone things on their own. However, I will note that Jesus called mankind the “sons of women,” but called himself the “son of man.”

Jesus said that we should treat others the way we would want to be treated, and he also said that however we judged others, the same method would be used to judge us. This being the truth, it would be wise to treat and judge our very own mate as an equal. Refusing equality always prevents a union from finding true happiness, the result being walking together limping, or even worse, walking alone.

One final question to the satan in all of us: If we are not willing to be an equal with our very own perfectly matched companion, then who would we ever be willing to call an equal?

Inexorable Conclusions

Fill in the blanks: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, _____, _____, _____. I believe the next numbers are eight, nine, and ten. What do you think?

In the same way, the mature believer develops a clear understanding of spiritual things that are not written in the scriptures. But we can know them, even if we have not actually seen or heard them before.

In fact, there comes a time for the spiritually mature when limiting discussion of spiritual things to only the scriptures is not only tiresome and remedial, but absurd.

Understanding even progresses to an advanced point where spiritual things become so deep and personal that discussing them aloud seldom happens at all. Instead, most discussions of spiritual matters quietly take place between our conscience soul and the spirit within us. And as we become advanced in our understanding, we discard the immaturity and serious fallibility of written guidance, entrusting our souls to the vastly superior authority of the spirit of love within us.

This means that both the scriptures and church attendance become remedial as we grow in the spirit of love. This is much the same as children progress to calculating higher math and leave behind the discussion of the ten basic numbers they once studied in depth. Imagine mathematicians forced to study the addition or multiplication tables their entire lives. It would be ridiculous. Yet for children, basic math is a challenge and delight to master. The same can be true for studying the scriptures, at least the enlightened bits and pieces they contain. But the serious student of life will find that the spirit of love, and God's creation itself, hold so much more spiritual enlightenment as to render any religion and its scriptures virtually useless by comparison.

Remember what Jesus said to the apostles: "I have many more things to tell you, but you cannot bear them at present. But when the helper comes, he will reveal all things."⁽¹⁾ So we see that there are many more things to be revealed to us which were never spoken of by Jesus.

In fact, spiritual maturity does not require any study of the scriptures whatsoever, or any kind of church going. Suffice to say, only love, which brings with it the fruits of the spirit, is necessary for growth.

In short, any religion and its scriptures are of little value to the vast majority of people, and of no long term value to anyone. However, no

one who is advanced in their understanding who would ever curse the christ Jesus, (not even those elders who rejected him, of whom Jesus approved, saying of their reasoning, “the old wine is good enough”). In short, only a demon would curse someone for repenting of selfishness and deciding to love others.

So study whatever scriptures you want. Attend a church if you want. An open heart and mind will usually gain a little from listening to someone else’s interpretation of God. But expect to outgrow such things if you are really seeking answers to life’s questions. We were made by our god, and in our god’s image, and dwell in a world created by his power. Therefore, all of the answers to life’s questions are automatically to be found within us, and around us.

Churches and scriptures are all man-made, so even if they avoid the crime of telling us how and what to think, they are still other people suggesting those things. What we are, by definition, must outgrow such tutoring and find us thinking for ourselves. Not only would such a proxy be bad for spiritual adults, it is not even permitted, for to presume authority to think for a peer is as wicked as any conceit ever known. We have all been given the vastly superior spirit of love that lives within us, and this is the only true word of god for each of us.

The physical representation of god can be seen in the world on which we dwell. It is also seen in a limited way in our individual bodies, in which our own spirits dwell. Along with our own spirit, the spirit of god can also dwell within us. This is a fact, for having been made in god’s image, the spirit automatically shares everything good that we are able to receive. Mere common sense reasoning about the nature of god confirms this must be so, yet even without reasoning, we somehow innately know that we can share this spirit and have access to its tutelage whenever we want. In short, every one of us can communicate directly with the spirit of god, which communicates back to us on the highest level each of us is able to comprehend, always doing so guided by its endless love.

Paul once rebuked a church that was interested in keeping the old physical laws, asking: “Did you begin with the spirit, only to end with the flesh? Are you such fools?” This is terrific logic, but Paul did not see how far it goes.

Not only does Paul’s excellent question also apply to us about his own interpretation and subsequent teachings about “what god says,” it even applies to a man as inspired as Jesus, who was also flesh. We must follow the spirit of love. Jesus rightly rejected being called “good” by an admirer, for Jesus replied to him, “Only God is good.”

We begin life with the eternal, invisible word of god speaking within us, surrounded by a temporary visible word of god around us.

Can anything spoken by any person replace that authority? Are we such fools?

Commentaries and Encouragement

The Power of Thought

Imagine going someplace by simply wanting to be there. What would it be like to do something simply by saying it will be done? These are amazing concepts to contemplate, and though far beyond our abilities, we somehow glimpse that such ideas will one day be a reality for us. Even our dreams hint at such things.

How fast is the speed of thought? This is not a question with a definitive answer, but we can conceive an idea of the speed of thought by understanding that the speed of light would sometimes be standing still by comparison. Even more astounding is that the speed of thought is the slowest a god works, not the fastest.

This is because a god (one without sin), in whom no darkness dwells, often moves at the speed of instinct or reflex. In other words, love instantly does the right thing, sometimes without even thinking. For just as we sinners are quick to think evil thoughts, but the impulse in our hearts to sin is often faster, so it is in an opposite way that a god's thoughts can be quick to think and then do what is good, but the impulse of such a heart often moves even faster. In short, a god can communicate the essence of what they are trying to say or do instantaneously.

It is difficult to comprehend what it would be like to have this kind of mind. No person in the same spiritual age as we are can understand it very well. But if we always fight taking sinful thoughts to heart, then pure instincts and reflexes must slowly develop within us. This is exactly the same principle of how a repetitive exercise always builds muscle.

As we understand time, if I said a million years, this might be just a fraction of the time for us to get to such a place of instinctual goodness. But what is that compared to eternity? It is not even a moment compared to the Eternal, the "from Everlasting." This helps us understand how any of the infinite number of sinless gods declare of themselves, "I Am" and can do any good thing they want by simply declaring, "It Is."

Nothing Is Hidden

The spirit hears our lies and genuinely hateful words, even when we are not talking. The same is true, of course, for genuinely loving thoughts. It is not our voices, but rather the sincere heartfelt meanings of our words and thoughts that the spirit understands. Put simply, if we were thinking it from the heart, we said it, and members of the spirit heard every word.

Jesus understood the importance of proper thinking. He knew that when he was thinking, his thoughts were not just things he had already learned that had become a part of his own conscious being, but that the thoughts could also be words from his lord, his father, or any member of the spirit. Thoughts can also be from lawless spirits (demons), which are simply those spirits who have not yet accepted the authority of love. Foremost of these demons is each person's own satan.

There are many things to say about thinking, about what it is and what it can do. But I want to focus on one particular aspect here, specifically, the incredible unity of the "Spirit" that contains an infinite number of members, who collectively say of themselves, when speaking to the dead, "I am One God", and, "There is no other God but me." How can such unity and oneness exist?

The answer is that all members accept each other as equal in value, never sin, and let love be their guide as the rightful highest authority. And one of the things that the sinless can share is each other's thoughts and feelings.

When this happens, then to think something from the heart is to have spoken it, to desire something is to have it. If the desire involves other members of the spirit, it does require their accord, however. That is the world we are becoming a part of, where thought and reality are often the same. So what will happen to us in the next world, where there is no flesh and only our spirits dwell? We can see the potential problem, which is why Jesus told us to try to get our thoughts in check, as well as our deeds. For example, he warned us that "to look upon another with lust is to have committed adultery in our hearts."

Recall what happened to Isaiah, a sinner like us. Taken in the spirit to appear before the lord and a host of other spirits, the first words out of his mouth were, "Woe is me, I am a dead man, for I am a man of unclean lips."

No wonder he was in terror for his life. While he could hear glorious thoughts and feelings of love that are impossible to describe, they in turn could hear and feel the corruption and weakness in every thought he had – and he knew it. Just picture the scene: A fair comparison of Isaiah's feeling about himself as he stands in the midst of this harmonious group is that he knows he is a dog by comparison.

Ask yourself, how would you fit into a society like heaven? Think of your every heartfelt thought being broadcast over a public loudspeaker, then ask yourself, are you really ready to talk with the sinless face to face?

But take heart, we will be ready when the time comes if we are obedient to the authority of love, for it cleanses us in preparation to enter the next age, just as it did those who entered life before us. With love, we can go without fear. Our spiritual parents do not expect us to be without need of care. They will rejoice at our arrival, just the same as physical parents rejoice over the birth of a long awaited infant. And this time when we are born into a new world, instead of awakening with crying, like we did entering this life, we awaken with a joy as great as laughter!

Under Construction

Everyone in our age is under construction, literally in the spiritual womb, so to speak, hopefully growing day by day, moment by moment.

Just as mother's milk is the first thing we receive to sustain our physical life, so it is that the air itself contains the first thing we receive that sustains our spiritual life. We all begin receiving physical sustenance soon after we are born, or we die. But much more important is the spiritual, contained in the invisible air we breathe. It is literally the first thing we do, or we will not live at all. And the very last thing we do at leaving this life is exhale.

Inside milk is a wide variety of nutritional elements that help us to grow, but the majority of this food is eventually determined to be of no benefit and is therefore eliminated from the body as waste, returning to the earth from whence it sprung.

The same principle applies to the spiritual and therefore our thought processes. In the air is contained every invisible thought or combination of thoughts that has ever been generated by living entities (but never every thought or combination of thoughts that ever will be). Whether it is spiritual, mental, or emotional, or some combination of these seemingly distinct but inseparable elements, we may intake a particular thought or combination of thoughts, like them, and so give them a home. But those that we reject are discarded and return to the spirit that generated them, or in the case of lawless spirits, to the darkness they have been semi-abandoned to, the experience being some amount of good, bad, or indifferent for all involved.

This is similar to the way we create a thing physically, but may then realize we no longer need it, or find some error or insufficiency in it. In the case of error or deficiency our solution is always to see if we can modify it, but if that fails then our created thought may get discarded. However, higher levels of spiritual awareness, which we seek, but have not yet attained, never completely discard what they create. Love always allows a thing to correct itself, even isolating the thing if need be for the protection of others.

Each of us are a thing similar to that, a vast conglomerate of thoughts in one being is what we are. And all of us are, or were isolated, needing or formerly needing to accept the authority of love. If we accept this minor change we will not be rejected as waste, instead finding we automatically now belong as a member of the spirit.

There is real peace of mind, even joy, in having a “live and let live” attitude that comes from love. By accepting the rights of others “to be,” we find ourselves granted the same fairness and are much better able to pursue whatever our own hearts desire. This is not only because having allowed others this basic right elevates our mind and soul to another level, but also because this attitude finds others more willing to assist us when they are able.

Demons

At the very instant we take an evil thought to heart a demon will enter our body. Even if the thought was simply to deny something that we know to be true (which is of itself an evil thought), a demon will enter. This always happens, without fail, regardless of how minuscule the error might have been. Such events are always accompanied by a twinge of pain to some degree, though usually so faint that we just ignore it, or do not even notice. Naturally, correct thoughts cause no discomfort at all, often even bringing noticeable comfort with them.

Learning to think is just a part of growing spiritually, so such mistaken thoughts are not a big problem, unless the errant thought taken to heart is being nurtured by its host. Moreover, the errant thought does not usually need immediate attention unless its host is considering giving it life by acting upon it in some way.

The reason the spirit is not concerned about straining out tiny specks is because the little demons will get swept away with larger ones when they are cast out. Any genuine thought of love that finds its way into actuality expels a multitude of wrongly harbored thoughts from our hearts. However, many demons can rush back in like the tide of the sea returning, if the person performing the work is prideful about it. In fact, the power of love is so great that even simple gratitude by recipients of a good deed can cause a multitude of demons to flee from them.

On the other hand, whenever we reject an evil thought without taking it to heart, the demon is rebuffed and returns to the darkness without entering us.

But what if the demon (evil thought) we now reject is one which we had formerly taken to heart? In the case of corrected thoughts, the demon is rebuked and immediately flees from the body to return to darkness, sometimes slightly wiser for having lived next to a greater light than itself. Interestingly, cast-out demons almost never flee our bodies from whatever particular place they entered us. This has to do with them concealing their true nature from the other thoughts dwelling within us from the very beginning they take residence.

Lastly, a demon that is cast out never causes any pain when it goes, only relief to the extent it was a burden.

Illness and Injury

It is unpleasant to think about why do people get sick or injured, but it does happen frequently and the reasons why it does should be considered.

There are a number of reasons why illness or injury might occur, but three in particular come to mind.

The first reason is that the spirit is punishing us for sin or mistreatment against another life entity.

The second reason is that it was a chance happenstance and is being allowed to take place. Under this heading might fall the problems resulting from inexperience, ignorance, accident, and similar types of things. Even curiosity can often be blameless. The spirit never allows harm to be the final result of these kinds of chances to those that are elect, even if the end result is death. The spirit always uses these random situations in some way to witness the nature of love.

The third reason is that illness or injury is caused by interceding for another life entity, or on behalf of the principle of love of itself.

The first reason signals that we are doing or have done something wrong. The second represents neither right nor wrong, only that the spirit is allowing a random chance to stand for some purpose. And the third signals that we are doing, or have done something right. Whatever the cause, it is up to us to talk it over with our god to discover the reason, or combination of reasons for the problem.

If it is a friend who is ill or injured, we do not want to be like Job's comforters were. Blind to mercy and compassion, they questioned his righteousness and passed judgment on him without pity. And though Job's trials and tribulations stemmed in part from his pride, remember, the spirit has testified that Job was as righteous a man as any in the land. If such things can happen to him, they can happen to any of us.

Instead, if we really love our friends, we will ask the spirit to have mercy, and to give them understanding and to heal them.

Lastly, it is important to note that illness and injury are not, and never have been, primarily due to luck or fate, two popular explanations to thoughtlessly describe what no one wants to spend much time really thinking about. Luck or fate, if viewed incorrectly, lead to critical mistakes, since they imply that the spirit of God is arbitrary or capricious, even unmerciful.

Luck is just another word for chance, but it has no ability to stop or slow illness and injury like interceding for another can. Likewise,

luck has no ability to originate or speed illness and injury like intentional wrongdoing. When chance illness or injury is allowed to happen by the spirit, one of the other two reasons is often involved. Stop and think: Does mere chance have the same authority as love? Of course not, so we can take heart and live without fear, for the effect of chance on the elect is almost non-existent compared to those ruled by self.

As to fate, meaning a thing “had to happen,” this is false when it comes to unhappy things like illness and injury. To try to direct the fate of another living entity in matters dealing with pain, suffering, or death is never for any adult to play with. Children though, do experiment with playing almighty god in their immature self-centered fantasy universes. On the other hand, determining that it will be fate for a good thing to happen is the occasional work of adult behavior. It is always lawful to do good.

Whatever happens to us, happens with our god’s knowledge. Remember, Jesus said, “Are not two sparrows sold for pennies? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unless your father wills it.” So we do not want to be like those who attribute sorrowful things like illness and injury to luck or fate. Such a conclusion is hoping to be excused from the responsibility of our actions, or disregarding our god’s knowledge of the events in cases of random chance allowed to stand.

At the end of this life, when we pass on to the next age after “dying” from something, there is no need to fear. Just as a pregnant woman is anxious at the time of delivery, and the event itself is usually accompanied by pain, she immediately forgets all of that as she rejoices over the baby. So it is that when we pass through to the next age, all of this “dying” will be utterly forgotten in our infinite joy on arrival.

Multitudes

Considering that Jesus compared the death of one of the elect and sleeping to be the same thing, it prompts this question: Where do we go when we are sleeping? Assuming we are among the elect, would it not be the same place as when we die?

Our entire body, as we know it, is a living parable. Consider that Satan took one third of the angels when he fell. Look how this relates to our bodies in that we generally sleep about one third of each day. In addition, this perfectly fits the companion parable of 666 being called the number of Satan's name. This 666 represents two thirds, and of course, this is the approximate amount of time each of us spends awake each day. Add the fractions together and the result is one.

Whether awake or sleeping, both conditions serve good purpose, for the essence of who and what we are remains basically the same in either dimension. That being the case, the spirit sometimes uses one dimension to help the other. Have you ever met yourself in your waking hours? You surely have, and in your dreams you have met yourself, too. Interacting with another individual, only to realize later that the person was the exact essence of ourselves is not always a pleasant experience either, for seeing ourselves as we really are is often depressing. No wonder one scripture laments, "The heart is desperately wicked, who can understand it?"

Nevertheless, the blessing of those ruled by love to be "scattered like dust" is more than just infinite offspring. It is also the fulfillment of dreams, all the things we hope. This happens by sharing the very essences of ourselves with those we love, and in so doing, each of us will eventually become a kind of individual multitude. We are one, each of us an individual living entity, yet we are also becoming infinite, part of everything.

As much as the oak is greater than the acorn, indeed as much as a planet is compared to a grain of sand, so is our future compared to the present. In fact, through the power of love, we will all become entire universes, one of and part of the infinite.

Spiritual Evolution

Bible literalists insist that man did not evolve from apes, but the evidence of some kind of kinship in the geological record is overwhelming to anyone who looks honestly. Personally, I think a simple visit to the zoo is all the proof needed.

This is not to say creation does not exist. Things have an origin, and I believe creation explains the missing links in the geological record of the progression of all species. Without sin and all the problems contained within it, including the memory of having done intentional wrong, an entity can change simply by wanting to, instantly. The point is, not only is there original creation, but creations keep happening, just as evolutions do.

The difference between the two is that creations are generated more by the will of spirit, while evolutions are more the result of physical forces. This is generally speaking and overly simplified, for both go together in small to large part, depending on what is needed or wanted, plus other variables.

The evolution of mankind shows us growth and change, physically and spiritually. On an individual level, our lifetime is a physical and spiritual evolution. And during this period, another kind of growth and change is happening, a kind of social evolution, as we grow to take a place in society. We attempt to harmonize our individual physical and spiritual presence with others, and find ourselves generally forced to be less self-centered and more accepting of the rights of others. Various societies and the rules we invent for them are a result of this.

However, in the purely spiritual realm, no set rules are ever needed for interaction between multiple entities, for everyone is partaking in the same spirit of “love one another.” This is something many churches and all religions have trouble with, for no hierarchy can exist when love is everyone’s authority. Indeed, many individuals have great difficulty accepting this, and many false leaders have been exposed when they can no longer conceal that they hate equality with those they are supposed to be helping.

This is not to say that the right institutions, run properly, never make it a little easier for an individual person to love. But history shows organized religions have done profoundly more harm than good. This is because the people that maneuver to run these institutions are usually not truly ruled by the authority of love. As ministers, they are far more politician than teacher, blindly refusing to

accept that they have absolutely no authority to dictate to anyone what to think, what to believe, what to say, or what to do, since the spirit of love is given to us all.

Yet the pharisees insist that we follow their individual or group interpretation of what to think and do about this love, instead of our own god-given understanding. How arrogant does a person have to be to pretend to know someone else's identity and infinity better than that individual?

Look where organized religion has taken us, and I will cite but a fraction of the crimes:

In the name of God, the leaders of the Mosaic religion, now known as Judaism, commanded the people to slaughter entire nations, even the babies. Prior to this, we are told their god executed every first born child of an entire nation. What ego, blindness near to insanity. They even had a death penalty for anyone who insulted their god.

Not to be outdone, when the Christian leaders came to have power they plundered the entire world "in Jesus' name." For centuries they enslaved entire nations, repressed freedom of thought, and all the while were banishing or executing every effective dissenting opinion. And by what authority? More madmen who truly believed God held them superior to all others.

In Islam we see the same crazy leadership. Their societies today are reminiscent of years ago in the other religions I cited. The women have virtually no rights and the people are indoctrinated to oppose other points of view as evil. This behavior does not sound like the results of any good thing one might learn from reading the Koran. Where is the respect for the different beliefs of other people? But this is only temporary, indicative of the level of Islamic evolution.

Even with Islam's present lunacy wherein some Muslims are committing random murders as love offerings to their still dawning god, the other religions cannot brag a whit more wisdom. This is because of Judaism's and Christianity's earlier heinous crimes, the weight of which still lingers.

All of these religions ultimately fail miserably for the spiritually mature, since true love always grows to see any system of religion as the falsehood it is.

Even the very best of individual churches become remedial for the spiritually mature. Physical parents try hard to raise children who can one day leave the nest and support themselves. The same principle applies overwhelmingly in the spiritual sense. But organized religions and most churches do not seek such a godly goal. Their reasons are obvious and ugly, and in so doing they reveal the awful true nature of those kind of leaders. And the fact that all of these so-called great

religions still do not acknowledge the only real authority is love proves the general absurdity of them all.

Not only is it the right of every individual to interact in all spiritual matters directly with their own god and soul, it is required from any adult.

Love simply cannot be an organization of any kind, whether religious, political, business, or social. It is a way of life, which is the end of self-centeredness. By definition it allows equality and negates the rights of any group to dictate beliefs to another group, and negates the right of any person to dictate beliefs to another individual.

More importantly, love negates the right of any group to dictate beliefs to any individual, even a group without sin. Which is how new life, something from nothing, a satan, can arise.

Just as important, as concerns the subject of this book, love negates the right of any individual to dictate beliefs to the group. Once any satan accepts this (for they certainly understand it), the dawn passes into the sunrise of a christ, which then seeks to repair the selfish damage it once had a hand in.

Of course, this wickedness of organized religions does not mean that no good has ever been accomplished by them, for love is never wasted, and we do see them growing. However, the fact remains that only love is in authority, and again, while an occasional church may be beneficial to a community, by definition, an organized religion becomes incapable of doing more overall good than harm.

We are all individuals, and every one of us will interpret the exact same thing differently, in very minute to very large degree. Love is too big to be fully contained in any thing or any person that ever has or ever will exist, including Jesus, Moses, Mohammed, Buddha, Gandhi, you or me, or any person – past, present, or future. Though love can be within us, and we can seek to make it a permanent part of ourselves, as demonstrated by people throughout the ages.

Rituals and Traditions

There is nothing inherently bad about rituals and traditions, but nothing necessarily good either, so common sense dictates we need freedom to examine routines.

For example, do we still need circumcision? This ritual was symbolic of a man giving his manhood to his wife and becoming a female in return. In the spiritual sense, it represents the two (give and receive) become as one eternal living entity of equal parts give and receive.

The sentiments this ritual represented are truly noteworthy. It stands as a stunning testament to how amazingly far our hearts were able to see with the tiniest spark of love. However, the old law's physical covenants have all expired, having been replaced by the spiritual covenant of love.

Other rituals are just plain sanctimonious, for example, when the practitioners of priestcraft tell us to get on our knees and talk to God publicly. Talking to God, and praying, which is more of an entreaty to a higher power than conversation, are things of a generally private nature, and rarely is it appropriate to do either on our knees. It may look reverent, but honest reflection on the matter results in our being offended, for it exists only to make us more subjective to the will of those who tell us to kneel. Which of us would demand their children approach on their knees to speak to us? If we, with all our faults, heartily embrace talking with our children face to face, then how much more so our heavenly parents!

The list of meaningless, even wrong, rituals and traditions is long in every day and age, for every people and nation. One current obscenity in my homeland consists of millions of little school children taking oaths to our flag, in essence training them to blindly follow the policies of our nation, as if our leaders never make mistakes. The sole purpose of this ritual is to brainwash future adults to be obedient to the status quo, subordinating, even disowning their own points of view, which are often better than our national policies. Children should be taught they are a citizen of the world, moreover, one day a citizen of the infinite, instead of instilling them with myopic nationalist pride.

Some organized religions want public prayers in these same schools for these impressionable young minds. This is a useless activity, ignored by the spirit for the pharisee behavior it is. The true goal of

such things is brainwashing, exactly the same as flag worship, if I may express it as such.

It is mental rape, a harsh description that is perfectly fair given the age of the recipients, to imprint defenseless little children with any political, philosophical or religious doctrines, except the principles contained in “love one another,” which are universal constants.

I am sure you can think of some other senseless standards yourself, so I will not labor over further examples.

The point is that we should question and examine anything which our hearts lead us to have an honest look at, no matter how established the behavior, and then discard those customs that we discover are wrong or that we have outgrown.

Predestination and Free Will

Mankind is subject to predestination and free will, rather than one or the other. They work together, and among other things, are like levels of awareness.

One way to help visualize this is to pair either of these concepts with the physical or spiritual realm. This simplistic approach results in four combinations: predestination/physical, free will/physical, predestination/spiritual, and free will/spiritual.

The first combination would be predestination in the physical realm. This one is mere machinery. The plant world is much like this.

The second possibility is free will in the physical realm. Here we have the animal world, including people, each of us dwelling in the organic machinery we call our bodies. The first combination of predestination in the physical realm is still the primary force operating in the animal world, for our bodies grow and then decline automatically. But in obeying the inherent needs and urges these bodies generate, we have something new here, for many animals, in varying degrees, are able to use free will in directing their actions to best satisfy themselves, both physically and spiritually (which includes emotionally).

The third pairing would be predestination and the spiritual realm. When free will in the physical realm acts truly unselfishly, such behavior, even if miniscule, is an act of love. And the predestination that happens here, in the spiritual sense, is that the spirit of love, which is an eternal flame, so to speak, recognizes itself in that spark of new love and will forever shepherd this new life until that entity is self-sustaining, meaning totally committed to the authority of love. From a standpoint of predestination, it is important to note that this is more like assistance or guidance by the spirit than it is control. The spark has free will to respond to the impetuses as it wishes.

Of course, the fourth combination is free will in the spiritual realm. Here is the place where love, and therefore life, is eternal. This is the highest level that exists. When entities having life inherent interact, free will is always the rule between them, never predestination.

These are simple descriptions, and it is very important to note that in the truest sense, these things are not divided, but rather all combined into one. However, love always has the highest authority.

In the course of this book I touched upon the subject of our thoughts sometimes coming to life, often without our realizing it. I also talked about different realities in the same place and time. Let me add that a

large part of everyone's entire life, (spiritually speaking) is literally custom made for us. This predestination, as it is, continues through our lives, though less spiritual lessons are pre-planned for us as we mature and begin to embrace the authority of love. This goes together with the fact that the more we embrace that authority, the more say we have in matters concerning our spiritual selves.

A physical example of this would be how a child's day could be largely planned. The parents know almost everything that will happen to the child that day, since they were cause, having pre-planned the day's events. Yet, for the child, everything that happened was seemingly random or spontaneous. These childhood days when nearly everything was completely planned for us pass in just a few years into adulthood and almost all free will.

But in the spiritual sense, pre-planning by a higher authority operates during our entire life. It does decrease, but it never stops. Our spiritual parents never stop tending to us at this age. After all, even the physically eldest of us are mere babies spiritually. However, as always, we have the free will to interact and respond to the spirit as we please.

In short, predestination is a primary essence of the physical realm, while free will is a primary essence of the spiritual realm.

Miracles

Personally, I have witnessed several events that I could only describe as miracles, and I know a multitude of other people have their own amazing stories they could tell.

Events like these, when private or personal, surely contain some blessing. But fanfare displays of miracles are another matter, always false to those already ruled by love.

All talk of the fictional stories about Jesus aside, when he says we should “love one another,” our hearts tell us this is pure truth, for the meaning of words like that carry with them their own authority.

To say it plainly, almost all of the miraculous stories throughout the Bible are pure fiction. Did Jesus feed a multitude with a few fishes and loaves? No. Though by moving the hearts of those who attended that sermon, so many had a change of heart and decided to share what they had hidden away, that all ate heartily. This is a spiritual miracle.

Did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead? Physically speaking, the answer is no. Spiritually speaking, the answer is yes, for Lazarus submitted to the authority of love, and for this reason Jesus did say about Lazarus’ death that he was only sleeping.

Did Jesus cure blind and deaf people? Physically speaking, the answer is essentially no, for each of us must be willing to do the work ourselves. Spiritually speaking, the answer is yes, for he was the inspiration for many. The ministry of Jesus was spiritual, not physical in design. When he said “the blind see” and “the deaf hear” he was talking spiritually.

The tampering with the original facts about Jesus’ ministry and the overwhelming amount of fanciful additions to these human interpretations by businessmen is staggering. Within the first 100 years after Jesus’ death they had turned him into a sort of magical wizard. However, calm and logical reflection makes it clear that no miracles are necessary for us to believe Jesus’ message about the authority of love. In fact, miracles would only cheapen his message. The greatest thing we will ever know is love. It stands on its own and requires no showmanship for this to be understood. The extremely few miraculous healings Jesus ever bestowed or inspired happened privately, so only the effected person was actual witness to the changes.

Jesus knew love was the key to eternal life! This is the real miracle he was trying to share with us dead souls! His selfish and childish days of self-aggrandizing boasts and lording dominion over his realm

were long gone. Jesus came to us offering and accepting equality with anyone who was willing.

Nothing supernatural is necessary for us to recognize the ultimate authority of love he preached, and no divinity on the part of anyone who says love is the only true authority is required to make it be understood either. We either accept it, or intentionally stay in the dark. Inherently, we recognize the sentiments contained in love as perfectly right for our spiritual life, just as we understand our need to breathe air for our physical life. The meanings contained in sayings like “love one another” are the wisest possible thoughts that will ever exist.

Try to picture, against the backdrop of eternity, the effect this thought of the ultimate power of love has as it takes hold in any satan’s heart, the dawn of real creation. Unable to deny love’s authority any longer, a light starts to shine in the awakening creature.

And in what way does love manifest itself at the very beginning? The answer is that this light of love manifests itself almost entirely self-centered, as opposed to the creature being totally self centered which it was but a moment before. This helps explain some of the childishness of the infant spirit of Jesus in the Old Testament, or the selfish childishness of all people.

“Love one another.” Perfection is contained in the meanings of this saying, and we all know it immediately, though in our self-centeredness we all hesitate to take it to heart.

Christ

Compared to what we must endure, was it easier for Jesus to understand things, since he was able to talk to God directly, whenever he wanted?

Are we not in the same position, able to talk with God directly and whenever we want? Of course we are, and the truth be told, we always were, until the businessmen took control of the stories about Jesus, exaggerating his person while discounting the rest of us.

This exaggeration about Jesus was easy to do, since his learning was so enlightened compared to many of his peers. Some of the people were so jealous or misunderstanding of his teachings that he wound up being accidentally and intentionally killed.

“No greater love exists than that a person lay down his life for his friends.” This is an exact truth spoken by Jesus. Yet multitudes of other people have done this very thing, both before and after his ministry. By Jesus’ own words, all such people are equal to him.

Furthermore, to clarify, dying for your friends is not the only greatest love, for love is not divided. Not all are called to serve in the same way, and those to whom more is given, more is required. However, all of us do have to be faithful to the authority of love, no matter what the consequences!

So what does it mean to be a christ? One way to answer is to say it is the period of life between discovering love and then finally submitting to the authority of it. Or, one could say it is a phase in life, very much like the pupa stage between being a caterpillar and then a butterfly. Other analogies to describe what takes place is that it is like the bridge crossing from being false to choosing to be true, or the bridge from dead to alive. The best analogy may be that it is simply self-centered choosing to be all-centered.

Astoundingly, this whole phase happens without that individual christ quite realizing it, very much like a dream. But it does not happen without witnesses, for the dead that awake to the spark of love that any christ represents will credit the source. And everyone of us who chooses to be ruled by love becomes a shining light of life for an additional multitude of demons.

But the fact is that Jesus is not the spark for everyone, indeed he is not the spark for most. For the vast majority of people it will be someone else who changes their hearts, and there is a never ending multitude of others that will follow them.

As for myself, I will always credit my wife as the spark of love most responsible for awakening my soul and saving me from the second death. She is my Christ and I will love her forever, first and foremost of my friends.

God is Love

The words God and Love are often used interchangeably, since they are in many ways essentially the same thing. However, ultimately there is no such thing as “God,” for we are all gods, and spiritually live in a world where all life that is ruled by love is equal in value, even if not in ability. To be exact, this thing called love is a concept, the highest ideal, and is never an individual life form.

The problem with trying to convey this concept from person to person is that words must fail to completely describe the power of love, just as any other device must fall short in conveying the essence of what ultimately contains everything.

In the Christian scriptures the word God is used in many places. Often, it means no more than the spirit of Jesus, particularly in the Old Testament. Sometimes it means the collective spirit, that is to say Jesus and the infinite number of other life entities ruled by the authority of love. This meaning is more common in the New Testament.

The word “god” as we presently use it has many definitions, and these various interpretations of the word can be useful for the purpose of teaching or communicating ideas. Sometimes the term is used to label an entity which came before us, or one with more love, or more wisdom, or more power, and sometimes the term simply describes who brought us into being – our author, as it were. However, ultimately there is no such thing as “God,” for only Love is to be revered above all else.

At one point in my lifetime I saw everything more clearly than my son. Stated plainly, when he was a baby I was essentially god to him. But he also has the spirit within him, and as the years have passed and he has grown from childhood to manhood, he has often added to, and occasionally even corrected my thinking on one subject or another. The latter does not happen frequently, but it is happening more and more often as he matures. Since we will both be growing forever, in the spiritual sense, he may never pass my total level of understanding, but he surely will equal it, for the gap is closing. I like that. In fact, he is welcome to know all that I understand. It is my pleasure to share and it is my delight to learn from him, as well.

The same spiritual principle applies: If we, with all our human frailties, delight in our children maturing to where we increasingly communicate with them as brothers and sisters (and this happens in

just a few years), then how much more so do our heavenly parents extend equality to us over the span of forever!

There is no one person who is God above all others. God is love.

Deism

Any person who honestly uses their power of reasoning must conclude there is a higher power than mankind. The proof of this is self-evident in the creation itself. True religion is a personal matter between man and his maker by its very nature, and can never be dictated by one person to another. Furthermore, anything from man that professes to be “the word of God” is inherently false.

That is a basic overview of general deist philosophy today. It mirrors my beliefs in many ways, and I have left all of organized religion and their man made words of God behind.

However, I would not classify myself exactly as a deist for a number of reasons, two of which I will comment on.

First, some deists hold the power of reason in highest regard. But reason itself ultimately concedes that love is the highest power, admitting itself to be a lesser authority. Second, most deist philosophers claim there is but one God. However, reason overrules this too, for ultimately we are all gods. This is because love is the highest authority and it can never be fully contained in any individual entity. Love is the absolute zenith in any realm of life. In other words, even one’s creators are subject to the authority of love when directing us, or they would lose the right to lead us.

For these and many other reasons, I subscribe to no religion at all, simply being my own honest individual. Indeed, each of us is a religion unto ourselves. Reason itself ultimately concludes this too, showing us that love is the only universal denominator between us all.

That having been said, I would like to share with you some thoughts from a book titled *The Age of Reason*, by Thomas Paine, who called himself a Deist. I have also included an abridged and edited letter he wrote to a friend at the end of these excerpts.

Paine’s thinking has shed a lot of light in dim places, especially regarding government as a younger man, then on religion in his twilight years. His first books literally helped lay the foundations of nations, but *The Age of Reason*, his last major work, will ultimately help lay the foundation of our world – a world which is coming to reject all religious fanaticism because of the pain and suffering it always causes, sooner or later.

The Age of Reason should be required reading for anyone who would dare proselytize his beliefs on another. I believe it is, in many ways, a more important book than the Bible – for anyone to whom

the Bible is important. The same goes for the Koran, the Torah and Talmud, or any other man-made device which dares tell another person “what God says,” or dictates to another person how to interact with their own god.

Paine’s landmark work was written in two major sections, approximately two years apart, and more than two hundred years ago. His words herein are very abridged, and in many places I rearrange or paraphrase. I was exceedingly cautious to never change what he meant, even in the few places where I disagree in part.

Paine believed that all of us could communicate directly with our maker. His goal was to free his fellowman from the mental tyranny of organized religions. He said, “My own mind is my own church,” and stressed that the true word of God was found in the creation itself, not in man made things like the scriptures.

The Age of Reason became famous throughout the United States and parts of Europe, and created a vicious backlash from organized religion which continued for years. Even today his work is reviled and suppressed by most clergy, for false workmen are humiliated by his logic. In fact, while the focus of Paine’s book is on Christianity, using nothing more than common sense reasoning, he stunningly destroys the authority of any religion’s scriptures as the “word of God,” and leaves no doubt that the only true religion is between each of us and our god.

When Christian leaders verbally burned him at the stake for his honesty, Paine picked up his pen again, writing *The Age of Reason – Part II*. This time he challenged the authority of the Christian scriptures as the “word of God” by using the scriptures themselves! Again, he succeeded brilliantly, pointing out dozens of the multitude of inconsistencies and outright lies in these writings. And again, organized religions savagely railed against him in their shameful embarrassment.

Unable to win anything but the most trivial arguments with Paine, religious leaders fueled a vicious smear campaign that succeeded in having him shunned by most of society in the years that followed the two publications. Demonizing him with an endless stream of lies and slander, they continued their rabid tirades against his work for decades, long after his death. But his legacy lives on in the many truths he helped illuminate, while his detractors are long since forgotten.

Please note that my overview of Paine’s book does not include quotes from the portions of Part II where he used just the scriptures to argue his points. Condensing these analyses to fit the limited space I have available might make them appear incomplete. You can find and

read a complete version of his book on the Internet, freely available as part of the public domain. I hope you will take the time to do so.

This concludes my introduction to an unknown brother's work. Here then is my often paraphrased, very abridged and edited *The Age of Reason*, by Thomas Paine:

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe in the equality of man, and that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Islamic church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national institutions of churches appear to me as human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind, to monopolize power and profit.

I do not condemn those who believe otherwise; they have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing or disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not.

Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God, communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles and saints; and the Muslims their Mohammed; as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

Each of those churches shows certain books, which they call revelation, or the Word of God. The Jews say that their Word of God was given by God to Moses face to face; the Christians say that their Word of God came by divine inspiration; and the Muslims say that their Word of God was brought by an angel from heaven. Each of those churches accuses the others of unbelief.

As for myself, I disbelieve them all.

* * *

The word revelation, when applied to religion, means something communicated immediately from God to man. No one will deny or dispute the power of the Almighty to make such a communication if he pleases. But admitting, for the sake of discussion, that something has been revealed to a certain person, it is revelation to that person

only. When he tells it to a second person, a second to a third, and so on, it ceases to be a revelation to all those persons. It is revelation to the first person only, and hearsay to every other, and consequently, they are not obligated to believe it.

When Moses told the children of Israel that he received commandments from the hand of God, they were not obligated to believe him, because they had no authority but his telling them so; and I have no other authority for it than some historian telling me.

When I am told that the Koran was written in Heaven, and brought to Mohammed by an angel, the account is the same kind of hearsay evidence and secondhand authority as the former. I did not see the angel myself, and therefore have a right to reject it.

When I am told that a woman, called Virgin Mary, said she was pregnant without intercourse, and that her betrothed, Joseph, said an angel told him, I have a right to believe it or not. Such a circumstance requires a much stronger evidence than their word for it, but we do not even have this, for it is only reported by others that they said so. It is hearsay upon hearsay, and I do not choose to rest my belief upon such evidence.

* * *

The Christian mythology presents Satan as making an insurrection and a battle in heaven, then being put into a pit, let out again, and then given a triumph over all creation when mankind was damned by eating an apple.

Putting aside laughter by its absurdity or detestation by its profaneness, it is impossible to conceive a story more derogatory to the Almighty.

In order to make a foundation for it to rise upon, the inventors gave Satan a power like the Almighty; for not only was Satan liberated from the pit, but afterwards his power increased to infinity. Before his fall he is an angel of limited existence, but afterwards he becomes omnipresent, meaning he exists everywhere, and at the same time.

Not content with this deification of Satan, they represent the Almighty as compelled to surrender the whole of creation to the sovereignty of this Satan, or come to earth and die.

That many good men have believed this strange fable, and lived very good lives, is without question. In the first place, they were educated to believe it, and they would have believed anything else if so indoctrinated. Also, many have been so enthralled by what they conceive to be the infinite love of God for man, in making a sacrifice

of himself, that the vehemence of the idea has deterred them from truly examining the profaneness of the story.

Has the pride of man become so great that nothing can flatter it except the suicide of his Creator?

I know that this bold investigation will alarm many, but it will be a consolation to those under the burden of what to believe to see the subject freely investigated.

* * *

The books called the Bible, we are told, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelations, are the words of God. It is therefore proper for us to ask who said so, that we may know better whether to credit such things. But the answer is, nobody knows.

The case, historically, is as follows: When the church mythologists established their system, they collected writings and managed them as they pleased. Whether the writings as now appear as the Old and the New Testament are in the same state in which those collectors say they found them, or whether they added, altered, abridged, or dressed them up is unknown.

Be this as it may, they decided by voting which books of the collection they had made should be the word of God, and which should not. They rejected several, voted some doubtful, such as the books called the Apocrypha, and those books which had a majority of votes are presented to us as God's official word.

* * *

It is not difficult to understand that credit was given to the story of Jesus Christ being the Son of God. He was born when the heathen mythology still had some fashion and repute in the world, and that mythology had prepared the people for the belief of such a story. However, the Jews, who had kept strictly to the belief of one God, always rejected the heathen mythology, and never credited the story.

It is interesting how doctrines of Christianity sprang out of the tail of the heathen mythology. A direct incorporation took place in the first instance, by making the reputed founder to be celestially begotten. The trinity of gods that then followed was no other than a reduction of the former plurality. The statue of Mary succeeded the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The deification of heroes changed into the canonization of saints. The Mythologists had gods for everything while the Christians had saints for everything. The church became as crowded with the one as the pantheon had been with the other, and

Rome was the place of both. The Christian theory is little else than the idolatry of the ancient mythologists, accommodated to the purposes of power and revenue. Yet it remains to reason and philosophy to abolish the amphibious fraud.

Nothing that is said here applies, even with the most distant disrespect, to the real character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and amiable man. The morality that he preached and practiced was of the most benevolent kind. Though similar systems of morality have been preached by many good men in all ages, it has never been exceeded by anyone.

But the stories of Jesus, relating to the supernatural parts, have every mark of fraud and imposition stamped upon them.

* * *

The parts of the Bible generally known by the name of the Prophets are the works of poets and itinerant preachers, who mixed poetry, anecdote, and devotion together.

There is not, in the whole Bible, any word that describes what we call a poet or poetry. The case is that the word prophet, to which later times have affixed a new meaning, was the Bible word for poet, and the word “prophesying” meant the art of making poetry or playing poetry to a tune upon a musical instrument.

The Bible speaks of prophesying with pipes and horns, of prophesying with harps and cymbals. If we now spoke of prophesying with a horn the expression would have no meaning, or appear ridiculous.

We are told of Saul being among the prophets, and also that he prophesied; but we are not told what was prophesied. The case is, there was nothing to tell, for this was a company of musicians and poets, and Saul joined in the concert, and this was called prophesying. But it appears that Saul prophesied badly, that is, he performed his part badly, for they say an “evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied.” (An evil spirit from God?!)

Now, were there no other passage in the book called the Bible, than this, to demonstrate we lost the original meaning of the word prophesy, and substituted another in its place, this alone would be sufficient; for it is impossible to apply the word prophesy in the place it is here used in the sense which later times have affixed to it.

The manner in which it is used here strips it of all religious meaning, and shows any man might be a prophet, or prophesy, as he may now be a poet or a musician, without any regard to his character.

Deborah and Barak are called prophets, not because they predicted anything, but because they composed the poem or song that bears their name. David is ranked among the prophets, for he was a musician, but Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not called prophets; and it does not appear from any accounts that they could sing, play music, or make poetry.

We are told of the greater and the lesser prophets. They might as well tell us of the greater and the lesser God, for there cannot be degrees in prophesying consistent with its modern sense. But there are degrees in poetry, and therefore the phrase is reconcilable to the case, when we understand it by the greater and the lesser poets.

* * *

If we permit ourselves to conceive right ideas of things, we must necessarily conclude the impossibility of change taking place in the Word of God; and therefore the Word of God cannot exist in any human speech or writing.

The continual change to which the meaning of words is subject, the lack of a universal language, which makes translations necessary, the errors to which such translations are subject, the mistakes of copyists and printers, together with the possibility of willful alterations, are of themselves evidence that human language, whether in speech or in print, cannot be the vehicle of the Word of God. The word of God exists in something else. It exists in the creation itself.

* * *

The Christian church has set up a system of religion very contradictory to the character of the person whose name it bears. It has set up a religion of pomp and revenue in pretended imitation of a person whose life was humility and poverty.

The invention of a purgatory, the releasing of souls supposedly imprisoned there, by prayers, bought from the church with money, the selling of pardons, dispensations, and indulgences are all inventions by the church to collect money.

If I owe someone money and cannot pay him, another person can take the debt and pay it for me. But if I have committed a crime, every circumstance of the case is changed. Moral justice cannot take the innocent for the guilty even if the innocent would offer itself. To suppose justice to do this is to destroy the principle itself. This single reflection shows that the doctrine of redemption is yet another

revenue collection idea, corresponding to debt which another person might pay.

I think man stands the same with his Maker as he ever did.

* * *

Some might say: Are we to have no word of God, no revelation? I answer: Yes! There is a Word of God; there is a revelation. The word of God is the creation we behold, and this is the word that no human invention can counterfeit or alter.

The Creation speaks a universal language, independent of human tongues, as various as they are. It is an ever existing original, which every man can read. It cannot be forged; it cannot be counterfeited; it cannot be lost; it cannot be altered; it cannot be suppressed. It does not depend upon the will of man whether it shall be published or not; it publishes itself from one end of the earth to the other.

* * *

Man understands in the meaning of God “first cause,” that is, the cause of all things.

Incomprehensibly difficult as it is for a man to conceive what a first cause is, he believes it from the greater difficulty of disbelieving. It is indescribable to think that space can go on forever, but it is more difficult to conceive it ending. It is beyond the power of man to conceive eternity; but even harder to understand no time.

In like manner of reasoning, everything we behold carries in itself the internal evidence that it did not make itself. Every man is evidence to himself that he did not create himself; neither could his father make himself, nor his grandfather, nor any of his race; neither could any tree, plant, or animal make itself; and it is the conviction arising from this evidence, that carries us by necessity, to the belief of a first cause eternally existing.

This is a nature totally different to any material existence we know of, and by this power all things exist; and man calls this “God.”

What more does man need to see to know that the power that made all these things is divine, is omnipotent? Believe this, and with a force impossible to deny a moral life will follow.

* * *

The Christian system of faith appears to me as a sort of denial of God. It is made up chiefly of man-ism, with little deism, and results in being as close to atheism as twilight is to darkness.

It introduces between man and his Maker an opaque body, which it calls a redeemer, just as the moon places itself between the earth and the sun; and it produces by this means an irreligious eclipse of light, which has put the whole orbit of reason into its shade.

Natural philosophy, embracing the whole circle of science, is the true study of the works of God, and is the true theology.

As to the theology that is now studied in its place, it is only the study of human opinions and fancies concerning God.

* * *

It is a fraud for the Christian system to call the sciences "human inventions." It is only the application of them that is human.

Man cannot make principles, he can only discover them. Every science has principles as fixed as those by which the universe is governed.

Man can make or draw a triangle, therefore it may be said that a triangle is a human invention. But the triangle, when drawn, is just the image of the principle. The triangle does not make the principle, any more than a candle taken into a dark room made the chairs that before were invisible. All the properties of a triangle exist independently of the figure, and existed before any triangle was thought of by man. Man had no more to do in the formation of those properties than he had to do in making the laws by which the heavens move, and so one must have the same divine origin as the other.

The Almighty lecturer, by displaying the principles of science in the structure of the universe, has invited man to study and imitate.

The advocates of the Christian system foresaw the knowledge that man would gain, with the aid of science, of the power and wisdom of God that is manifested in the structure and works of the creation, and that it would call into question the truth of their system of faith. Therefore it became necessary to their purpose to reject the study of science. They even persecuted it, and the age of scientific ignorance commenced with Christianity. It is almost impossible to believe that any religion would call it wickedness to seek to discover the structure of the universe that God had made, but the fact is too well established to be denied.

If we survey our world, we find every part of it filled and crowded with life, from the largest animals to the smallest insects the naked eye can see, and from there to others still smaller, totally invisible

without a microscope. Every tree and plant, every leaf, serves not only as habitation, but as a world to some numerous life form.

Since no part of our earth is left unoccupied, why suppose that the immensity of space is a naked void, lying in eternal waste? There is room for millions of worlds as large, or larger than ours, each of them millions of miles apart from each other.

In the midst of those reflections, what are we to think of the Christian system of faith?

I believe there have been men who persuaded themselves that a pious fraud, under some circumstances, might be productive of good. But the fraud once established could not afterwards be explained, begetting the calamitous necessity of going on. The people who first preached the Christian system of faith, combining it in some measure with the morality preached by Jesus, persuaded themselves it was better than the heathen mythology that then prevailed. But from the first preachers the fraud went on to the second, and to the third, until the idea of its being a pious fraud became lost in the belief of its being true; and that belief was further encouraged by the interest of those who made a livelihood preaching it.

But though such belief, by such means, might become common among the laity, it is next to impossible to explain the continual persecution carried on by the church against the sciences and its professors; except the church knows it cannot hold its power without such oppression, since the true word of God is self-evident when one contemplates the Creation itself.

* * *

I well remember, when about seven or eight years of age, hearing a sermon upon the subject of what is called Redemption by the death of the Son of God. After the sermon ended, I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden steps (I perfectly remember the spot), I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard, and thought to myself that it was making God Almighty act like an emotional man, that he would kill his son when he could not avenge himself any other way.

This was not one of those kinds of thoughts that had any childish levity. It was to me a serious reflection, arising from the idea that God was too good to do such a thing, and too almighty to be under any necessity of doing so.

* * *

There are three principal means that religions employ to control mankind: Mystery, Miracle, and Prophecy.

With respect to Mystery, everything we behold is, in one sense, a mystery. Our own existence is a mystery, as is the whole vegetable world. We cannot account how an acorn, when put into the ground, is made to develop into an oak. But that it happens, we know for a fact, so it is not a mystery in this regard, even if the cause is unknown.

In the same sense, the word mystery cannot be applied to moral truth. Where it came from we do not know, but we know innately the correctness of moral truth, for a fact.

The very nature of religion proves it must be free from everything mysterious, for it must be to the comprehension of all. True religion is not learned like the secrets and mysteries of a trade, but rather by reflection. It arises out of the action of one's own mind upon the things which one sees, or upon what you may happen to hear or read, and the practice joins itself together.

But when men set up systems of religion incompatible with the word of God in the creation, they needed to invent a way to prevent questions, inquiries and speculations. The word mystery answers this purpose, and thus it has happened that religion, which is in itself without mystery, has been corrupted into a fog.

In the same sense that everything is a mystery, everything is a miracle, and no one miracle is greater than another. The elephant is not a greater miracle than a mite, nor is a mountain more miraculous than an atom. To an almighty power it is no more difficult to make one or the other, and no more difficult to make millions of worlds than one. Therefore, everything is a miracle in one sense, while in another, there is no such thing because it is only a miracle compared to our power and comprehension, but not a miracle to the power that performs it.

Mankind has observed certain laws by which nature is supposed to act, and calls it a miracle when something contrary takes place. But unless we know the whole extent of those laws and powers, we are not able to judge whether that which appears miraculous is within, or beyond, nature's natural ability to act.

Since appearances are so capable of deceiving, and things not real have a strong resemblance to things that are, it is inconsistent to suppose the Almighty would use miracles. It also implies what is preached could not stand on its own, degrading the Almighty into a showman.

Moreover, it is the most equivocal sort of evidence, for the credibility of any miracle rests solely on the reporter, and therefore it has the same chance of being believed whether true or false. Suppose

I were to say, that when I sat down to write this book, a hand presented itself in the air, picked up the pen, and wrote every word; would anybody believe me? Would they believe me a whit more if it was a fact? Since a real miracle is subject to the same credibility doubts as a falsehood, the inconsistency becomes even greater to suppose the Almighty would use them, for it is more difficult to believe a miracle than obvious moral principle. Moral principle is self-evident and speaks universally as a word of God, all by itself.

As Mystery and Miracle took charge of the past and the present, Prophecy took charge of the future, and rounded the tenses of faith. It was not sufficient to know what had been done, but what would be done. The supposed prophet was the historian of times to come; and if he happened, in shooting with a long bow of a thousand years, to strike within a thousand miles of a mark, the ingenuity of posterity could make it a bulls-eye. And if he happened to be directly wrong, God had changed his mind.

It was shown earlier that the original meaning of prophet and prophesying has changed, and that a prophet, in the sense of the word now used, is a creature of modern invention. It is owing to this change in the meaning of the words, that the flights and metaphors of the Jewish poets, whose phrases and expressions have their original meanings obscured by the distance of time and culture, have been erected into prophecies, bent into explanations at the will and whimsical conceits of sectaries, expounders, and commentators. Everything unintelligible became prophetic, and even a blunder would serve for a prophecy, as anything unclear could be shaped into fact.

If by prophet, we mean one to whom the Almighty communicated some event that would take place in the future, either there were such people, or there were not. If there were, future events would be told in terms that could be understood, and not related in such an equivocal manner as to fit so many circumstances that might happen afterwards. It is conceiving very irreverently of the Almighty to suppose he would deal in this jesting manner with mankind.

But it is with Prophecy as with Miracle. It cannot answer the purpose even if it were real. Those to whom a prophecy was told could not tell whether the reporter was lying or not; and if the thing prophesied should happen, or something like it, among the multitude of things that are happening daily, nobody could know whether it was foreknown, or guessed, or whether it was accidental. A prophet is therefore useless and unnecessary.

On the whole, Mystery, Miracle, and Prophecy belong to the fictitious and not to true religion, and are tools by which religion has

been made into a trade. The success of one impostor gave encouragement to another, and the quieting salvo of doing some good by keeping up a pious fraud protected them from remorse.

* * *

If I have already died in this body, and am raised again in the same body, it is presumptive evidence that I shall die again. This kind of resurrection is a gloomy doctrine.

As a matter of choice, as well as hope, I would rather have a more convenient form than the present. Every animal in the creation exceeds our abilities at something. Winged creatures pass over more space with greater ease than man. The smallest fish swims better than us beyond comparison and even the sluggish snail can ascend from the bottom of a pit.

The resurrection of the same body is far too little for all the powers and possibilities God has shown us.

* * *

Thought is of a different nature from everything else we know, and is essentially distinct from matter. A specific thought is eternally and identically the same. Every time that specific thought takes place, in whomever, or whatever, that thought has the capacity of existing unaffected by whatever combination of matter it resides in.

A thought therefore has in itself a capacity of being immortal, living wherever it is given a home, and living in as many homes as it is given.

It stands to reason then, that a producer of thoughts can also be immortal. Therefore, our own self-consciousness of existence, which produces its own thoughts, can be immortal and exist independent from matter we formerly occupied.

* * *

Man innately realizes the existence of an Almighty power. We know this for a fact though we cannot fully grasp the nature and manner of it. We also cannot conceive how we came here ourselves, yet we know for a fact that we are here. We must also know then, that the power that called us into being can call us to account for the manner in which we have lived here.

Were a man as fully and strongly impressed as he ought to be with the belief in God, he would stand in awe of God and his moral

life would be regulated by the force of knowing that wrong behavior can never be concealed. To give this belief the full opportunity of growth, it is necessary that it act alone. This is deism.

If there ever was such a man as Adam, he was certainly a Deist. The only religion that has not been invented is pure and simple deism. But deism does not answer the purpose of despotic governments. They cannot lay hold of religion as an engine of power unless they mix it with human inventions and make their own authority a part. Neither does Deism answer the avarice of priests, who incorporate themselves and their functions with a religion and become, like the government, a party in the system.

Deism teaches us all which is necessary to be known, without the possibility of being deceived by others. The creation is the Bible of the deist. He reads there, in the hand-writing of his Creator, the immutability of God's power, the certainty of his own existence, and understands all man-made Bibles and Testaments are forgeries.

* * *

In summary, the idea or belief of a word of God existing in speech or writing is inconsistent, in itself. The reasons, among many others, are the lack of a universal language; the mutability of language; the errors to which translations are subject, the possibility of suppressing such a word; the probability of altering it, or of fabricating the whole and imposing it upon the world.

The Creation we behold is the real and ever existing word of God, in which we cannot be deceived. It proclaims his power, it demonstrates his wisdom, and it manifests his goodness and beneficence. The moral duty of man consists in imitating this.

I am not worried about my future existence. I am content with believing, even certain, that the power that gave me existence is able to continue it, in any form and manner he pleases, either with or without this body; and it appears to me more probable that I shall continue to exist hereafter than that I was brought into existence in the first place.

It is certain that, in one point, all nations of the earth and all religions agree – all believe in a God. The things in which they disagree are the man-made additions annexed to that belief; and therefore, if ever a universal religion should prevail, it will not be by believing anything that is not already known to us all.

All my detractors resort, more or less, to what they call Scripture Evidence and Bible authority, to help them out. They are so little masters of the subject that they confuse a dispute about authenticity

as a dispute about doctrines. Anything may be claimed to be proved from the Bible, but before the Bible can be admitted as proof, the Bible itself must be proved, for if the Bible is not true, it ceases to have authority and proves nothing.

It has been the practice of all Christian commentators, priests, and preachers, to impose the Bible on the world as a mass of truth, the word of God. They have disputed and wrangled, and anathematized each other about the supposed meaning of parts and passages therein. One has insisted that such a passage meant one thing, another that it meant directly the contrary, and a third that it meant something different from both; and this they call understanding the Bible. The answers I have seen in reply to me have been written by these pious men, and like their predecessors, they contend and wrangle, and in understanding the Bible; each understands it differently, but each understands it best; and they agree on nothing but in telling their readers that Thomas Paine understands it not.

Now instead of wasting their time in fractious disputes about doctrinal points drawn from the Bible, these men ought to know, and if they do not it is polite to inform them, that the first thing to be understood is, whether there is sufficient authority for believing the Bible to be the word of God, or whether there is not? Plainly there is not.

There are matters in that book, said to be done by the express command of God, that are as shocking to humanity as any wickedness ever done by man. When we read in the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, etc., that the Israelites came upon whole nations who they put to the sword, not sparing the elderly, not even the infants, that they left not a soul alive, are we really to believe that it was God who commanded these things!

* * *

Paine's Letter to a Friend

In your letter you cite quotations from the Bible, which you call the "word of God," to show my opinions on religion are wrong. However, I could give you as many, from the same book, to show yours are wrong, so consequently, the Bible decides nothing as it decides any way we choose. But by what authority do you call the Bible the "word of God?" This is the first point to be settled.

It is not your calling it so that makes it true, any more than the Muslims calling the Koran the "word of God" makes that true. Popish councils voted the books that now comprise the New Testament to be

the “word of God.” This was done by yeas and nays, as we vote a law. The Pharisees of the second Temple did the same with the books that comprise the Old Testament. And this is all the authority there is, which is no authority at all. I am as capable of judging for myself as they were, and I think more so, because they made a living by their religion, so they had an interest in the vote they made.

You may think a man is inspired, but you cannot prove it. The same is the case with the word “revelation.” There can be no evidence of such a thing, so you can no more prove revelation than you can prove what someone dreams.

It is said in the Bible that God spoke to Moses, but how do you know? Because, you say, the Bible says so. The Koran says that God spoke to Mohammed, do you believe that too? No. Why not? Because, you will say, you do not believe it. And so, because you do, and because you do not, is all the reason you can give for believing or disbelieving, except that you will say that Mohammed was an impostor. And how do you know Moses was not an impostor? As for me, I believe all are impostors who pretend to hold verbal communication with the Deity.

The case is, you form your opinion of God from the account of him in the Bible; and I form my opinion of God from the wisdom and goodness manifested in the structure and the works of the Creation.

The result is, by taking the Bible for your standard, you arrive at a bad opinion of God; but by taking God as manifested in the Creation for my standard, I form a bad opinion of the Bible.

The Bible represents God to be a changeable, emotional, vindictive Being; making a world, then drowning it, afterwards repenting, and promising not to do so again. He sets one nation to cut the throats of another, then stops the sun till the butchery is done. But the works of God in the Creation preach a different doctrine. In that vast volume, we see nothing to give us the idea of a changeable, emotional, vindictive God. Everything we see there impresses us with a contrary idea – that of eternal order, harmony, and goodness. The sun and the seasons return at their appointed times, and everything in the Creation proclaims that God is unchangeable.

Now, which “word of God” should I believe? One is a book that any impostor might make, but the other is the Creation itself, which none but an Almighty Power could make. The Bible says one thing and the Creation says another. The Bible represents God like a mortal, but the Creation proclaims him with all the attributes of a God.

That bloodthirsty man, called the prophet Samuel, makes God to say, (i Sam. xv. 3), “Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy

all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.” That Samuel or another impostor might say this, is what, at this distance of time, cannot be proved or disproved, but in my opinion, it is blasphemy to say, or to believe, that God decreed it. All our ideas of the justice and goodness of God revolt at such impious cruelty. It is not a God, just and good, but a devil, under the name of God, that the Bible describes!

What makes this pretended order to destroy the Amalekites appear even worse, is the reason given for it. The Amalekites, 400 years before, according to the account in Exodus xvii. (but which appears to be a fable from the magical account of Moses holding up his hands), had opposed the Israelites coming into their country. This the Amalekites had a right to do, because the Israelites were invaders. And this opposition by the Amalekites, at that time, is given as a reason, that everyone, born four hundred years afterwards, should be put to death. And to complete the horror, Samuel chopped the leader of the Amalekites in to pieces.

This slaughter was done by the express command of God? I will never believe any book that ascribes cruelty and injustice to God, and reject the Bible as unworthy of credit.

As I have now given some of my reasons for believing the Bible is not the word of God, I ask your reasons for believing the contrary. But I know you can give none, except you were educated to believe the Bible; and as the Muslims have the same reason for believing the Koran, it is evident that education makes all the difference, and that reason and truth have nothing to do with it. You believe the Bible from the accident of birth, and the Muslims believe the Koran from the same accident, and each calls the other “infidel.” But leaving the prejudice of education aside, all are infidels who believe falsely of God.

When you have examined the Bible honestly, for I do not think you have, and permit yourself to really think about “God,” then you will probably believe as I do. But this letter is not written to change your opinion, but rather to satisfy you, and some other friends whom I esteem, that my disbelief of the Bible is because of my genuine belief in God.

* * *

This concludes the excerpts from *The Age of Reason*.

Personal

Creation

In the beginning, it was nothing, it felt nothing, except that it was somehow conscious of being nothing, though it did remember excruciating pain that had slowly faded away into the nothing that it had become. With exceedingly great sorrow, the last thought it had was “I am nothing.”

Then, suddenly, “I am,” he thought to himself. He looked at himself and rejoiced; “I am, I am like a god,” he said. “I am like a god, I am like a great god,” he shouted.

There was another Presence with him, but he could not comprehend it, for he was thinking how glorious he was. The spirit tried to speak to him, but he was too busy beholding the glory in himself to listen, “I am like a great god, I will be like the greatest god,” he boasted!

Every member of the Eternal was trying desperately to reach him now, in hope of somehow saving him, but he could not be stopped. Magnifying himself exceedingly, he proclaimed, “I will be like the greatest god; I will be even greater!” He was wondering if such a thing was possible as he vanished from their presence.

The next thing he knew he was ruling over a world with absolute authority. No creature was his equal, and he alone was great. But the joy he felt in this was brief and faded almost immediately, and was quickly replaced by profound loneliness that was utterly consuming him, and his unequaled greatness was no comfort at all. Finally, he could no longer bear it; his soul in utter anguish over his aloneness, he cried out, “O, God, I wish I had someone like me to be with.”

Instantly, his God appeared to comfort his aching spirit, and he remembered that this lonely world had all been a lesson he had needed. Lovingly, his God asked, “How about we get you a companion?” “Yes,” he answered happily.

He will recall later that one of his members hoped he could have this companion without allowing for equality, and then others among his members hoped this, too.

“All right, I need you to fall asleep,” God said. This seemed strange to him because he perceived it to be a nonexistence, so he questioned it. In fact, it seemed so strange a request that he questioned going to sleep two more times. But each time he did, God assured him with a faith he knew he could trust, so he willed himself to sleep.

He will later remember a few unusual things that happened while he was sleeping though, and they were revelations to him when they were recollected. First, he worried that his companion might rule over him, but God reassured him immediately. But then he again hoped he might somehow have a companion and yet rule over this coming friend. After this happened, he asked his God, "Can I have two companions?" to which God replied, "No." Yet his desire for two companions was so strong that he asked God over and over again, certain that one would not be enough. Six times he asked and received "No" for an answer, but the seventh time he asked, God stopped and paused to think about something.

He also remembered that he was somehow now outside of himself and able to watch himself thinking. As he beheld the vast expanse of nothingness (except it had some luminescence to it) from which God was about to make his companion, he genuinely doubted such a thing was possible (understand, he was beholding himself). "How can something come from nothing?" he wondered. "My friend will never be able to be my equal?" he wondered to himself. (Later he realized he was wrong, for he was the same thing she was being made from.)

The next thing he knew he awoke, and what an awakening it was! Pure Joy! That is what happened next! He had someone just like himself to be with! They rejoiced exceedingly as they raced all around their world, discovering the treasures within it, and everything one of them found was immediately and completely shared with the other! What ecstatic delight! He never knew such incredible happiness was possible!

How long this joy lasted he did not know, only that it was perfect and complete without any exception. But he did recall, just before it ended, that his friend was thinking and acting in a way he had never seen. He wondered why that was and then his friend was standing before him holding that which was forbidden, and offering it to him. He accepted, knowing he should not, but he rationalized he could make the excuse that his friend offered it to him, though he knew it did not excuse him. The truth is that he was just curious, just like his friend had been.

The great joy they once held was gone immediately. Instead of sharing everything like they once did, now they were deciding which of them should possess what, though nothing was very interesting any more. Back and forth they went, calmly deciding who should claim each particular thing as their own, when suddenly, "It's mine!" his friend shouted, latching hold of something. "What is it?" he exclaimed, as he too grabbed hold of it. "It's mine!" his friend shrieked. "No, I want it!" he screamed. "What is it?" he demanded

angrily. They wrestled furiously for possession of it, neither of them relenting. "It's mine!" his friend screamed at him. "What is it?" he demanded with incredible fury, lamenting from his heart that God should make his companion stop refusing to answer his question. "It's the ability to reproduce ourselves," his friend immediately answered him.

"I want it!" he yelled. "No!" the answer shot back, as the frenzied battle raged on, both of them fighting with all of their might. But he could not prevail; his friend broke away with possession of it, and he wailed in bitter grief.

He stopped crying when their God appeared to find out what was wrong. Soon, he and his friend were shouting blame at one another. She tried to crush his spirit by saying that since she won the fight for possession of it, she was therefore stronger and better than him. Her words cut bitterly into his soul and he was utterly heartbroken. But God immediately comforted him, and rebuked her, asking, "Is it not better to give than to receive?" She was humbled by God's words and stopped her arrogance immediately, as she worried if her companion might be better than her. When he then realized that he possessed the "give" of having children, while she possessed the "receive," he tried to crush her spirit by saying that he was stronger and better than her because of it. His words cut bitterly into her soul, and when he saw that she was utterly heartbroken, he told her that his sin was her fault, to which she despaired of living any more. God now turned to comfort her.

God then left them so they would be alone together, in hopes that they would choose to forgive each other, first trying hard to convey to them that they were still equals and should love each other.

Still hurt and angry, at first they told each other more lies about what would come to pass for each other, their selfish wills pressing hard to hurt each other.

But they were unable to deny their truest feelings. Slowly the love they felt for each other began to reappear, and when they finally repented of their selfishness they began moving towards each other, soon finding themselves racing towards their joyful reunion. The newest eternal member of the spirit of love was about to be born.

The 7th Day

Once upon an infinite number of times a beloved child was reflecting on what was happening as it was taking place and realized while playing with his and her toys that creating things with them was possible and so was like a god proclaiming I am to these things and having never been in control of anything before proclaimed authority not just over what they had created but over all creations ever which was soon discovered that while halfway a fact in their new world was but childishness even foolishness to everyone else but he and she insisted on dominion over all things and so they were set outside all alone for a moment so the child could see how it really looked for he and she were even claiming to have begot the very parents they originated from and so now all alone they asked themselves who am I and beholding their answer in themselves did not understand why they were only equals instead of over all as the future suggested it had a way to keep them above all else but he and she later repented of wanting such total dominion while nearly dying from shame as earlier gods remembered their own early days for though having forgotten now remembered the lessons they too had first learned bless this little child him and her and welcome home they said to their children as soon as you are able they spoke from their heart and thank you for reminding us these other members of the spirit spoke from their hearts as they picked up the boy and girl who had died and broken in two in seeking to be above all and encouraged them to stop hurting each other and reunite and though the boy and girl were fearful they would be hurt again and still wanted to be above each other in their selfishness they decided to move towards equality even trying to share each other's temples as a gesture of love but just as physical babies fall before walking so it is with spiritual babies but they were not ashamed but instead happy at the small gain and so they had truly begun trying to accept equality to each other and this time they were able to stand and though still apart struggling to accept their obvious equality they had moved closer and though not walking in agreement yet were encouraged by the gain so took another step towards each other and the pain of having fallen was swallowed in the joy of having moved towards each other in true friendship as walking turned into running towards their reunion of flight...

A Common Problem

About everyone I knew, and everyone I met, I said in my heart, “I am better than you.” Even worse, I was sure of it most of the time, and on the rare occasions when I was not, I would seethe with jealousy and immediately look for a way to believe I was better. It was not enough for me to be an equal – I wanted to be above you.

Sadly, I confess that this is no story I am telling here, but rather my true confession.

Two plus eight equals ten, three plus seven equals ten, four plus six equals ten. A child could see that different components can equal the same total. But I wanted anyone different to be inferior, and so I tried, wallowing in the quagmire of spiritual fractions until I arrived at zero, for myself.

I could hang my head in shame, but I am not alone, because it is, or was, everybody’s biggest problem, everybody’s strongest demon. We call it pride, and what a giant-size demon it is, the king of them all, for though Satan lived in heaven, he was nevertheless cast out for his sin. And what was that sin? He was exceedingly proud of himself, to the point that he magnified himself above all others, even above the collective one God. In other words, he said he was greater than all the other infinite number of Gods combined – the very spirit itself.

In view of this, it is easy to understand the tremendous size of our own human pride, in our spiritual youth, which always says in its heart, “I am better than you.”

No wonder the old law said, “All who see God’s face must die.”* For what does God’s face look like? Your very own reflection in a mirror! Such is the incomprehensible love felt for us by the spirit that we should have equality with the almighty available to us at all times. But babies, self-centered, and self-righteous, cannot bear to share anything, not even that which they were given.

The fact remains, however, that there is simply no fitting place for arrogance – not in this current age, and most certainly not in the next age. So we should always keep an eye on cultivating the good fruits of the spirit in ourselves. But until that new age comes for us, we need to be working day to day in this temporary illusion we call “time,” learning to love one another, and trying to rid ourselves of pride and all the other foolish and evil thoughts with which our hearts and minds seem to be continually occupied.

We know that the spirit can appear in any form. Knowing that nothing is hidden from them, and that our very thoughts, if from the

heart, can actually be heard by them, what kind of impression do you think we usually make?

*Note: Our spiritual growth at the time this old law was given (“All who see God’s face must die.”) shows us how spiritually childish the people (represented by Moses) and the spirit of Jesus were back then. They were so jealous to witness an indisputable equal (at the very least) that they would search for any flaw in order to justify killing this other being.

Two other examples of this kind of spiritual immaturity come to mind. One is shown in the interaction between Job and his lord in a situation of being “face to face” (in a sense), when all Job cared about was destroyed, except his wife. Another was when Jacob was spitefully crippled by the angel of his Lord after Jacob wrestled with him and neither could prevail.

Voices

On two different occasions, both many years ago when I was a young man, I heard a voice speak directly to me from thin air. The spirit leads me not to retell the exact words I heard (it would be irrelevant, for they were parables intended privately for me), but the essence of the words on the first of these occasions was to tell me that I was a better person than most other people.

What arrogance I possessed, to hear the long-standing desire of my innermost heart spoken aloud. This is now very embarrassing to me, for it plainly shows the profound conceit I once harbored, and a love for myself far above all others. It also indicates some mental illness, for want of a better term, though anyone who is not ruled by love is very sick indeed. Also, note that it does not indicate some illness because I heard the voice, but because I was more flattered than I was repulsed by the lie. However, as I see the potential to do some good with it, I am relating to you what is humiliating for me.

You see, the desire to be above my fellow man had been an overwhelming desire for me since early in my youth. But the arrogance, conceit, hatred and other useless fruit of worthless spirits was at long last weakening before the silent voice of the true spirit of life. "Time to give up this childishness; love is the answer" it always said. And this is why the voice came – a demon's desperation to hold on to me. In other words, the satan in me was losing its grip. I was finally conceding in my heart that my own puny wisdom was inferior to the infinitely greater wisdom of the everlasting spirit, and its eternal call to love each other.

The second instance was a disparaging comment regarding my wife's character, just after we were married. The details are not important, since the gist of it all is simply that the comment was true when viewed from one small perspective, but was actually an enormous lie. This I did not discover until years later, when I had grown wise enough to see a much bigger picture.

Bottom line: Never trust a spirit voice spoken out loud. Even if the words seem true, the intent surely has some evil in it, which time will reveal. The pure spirit speaks in silence. Its voice is clear and true, heard in the heart with never a need to ripple the air, for sinless spirit does not need the physical to be heard.

Many have gone astray having heard voices, even going so far as to commit murder. Truly this is a place where one's very light is

darkness, so blind, so sick in the soul that they hope wicked deeds will somehow supply proof that God holds them superior to others.

Others get close to that sick. Abraham, the patriarch of the people responsible for three of the world's most historically violent religions, nearly ruined his own spiritual odyssey, considering whether or not to obey a demon's voice that told him to murder his son. A man who set out to do such a thing today would rightfully be removed from society. However, long ago, the practitioners of priestcraft reshaped the near folly as proof of Abraham's superiority.

Though Abraham was a man who cared deeply about spiritual things, and therein was his merit, a proper way to retell the story is that it proves his great immaturity at the time, for he considered the invisible voice from his and Sarah's egos might be more important than the child from their heart.

Then there's Moses, who was also a man with some merit, but sick in the soul, proved by his vicious over-punishment of a cruel man by murdering him.

Yet these are the kind of people from whom we are all descended, spiritually speaking. Who among us is not self-righteous at heart, sometimes cruel and unforgiving? But the spirit will lead us to love, if only we let it.

Thankfully, it is not just the presently lost that comprise the "to Everlasting" that we live among, for a multitude of the "from Everlasting" is here as well. We just have a harder time seeing them in our arrogance.

Removing a Speck

Jesus said, "First remove the log from your own eye, then you can see clearly how to remove the speck in your neighbor's eye."

After many years of behaving like a pharisee in such matters, I finally learned what Jesus meant. It means that we should try to remove the speck from our neighbor's eye so that what we have done was unnoticed by them.

This is very hard to do though, but not because of our neighbor. It is because of us; for while the spirit will often immediately provide us the directions for success, our own nature wants desperately to draw attention to the good work we were attempting, so as to be "above our fellow man." Notice I said "were" attempting, because if we draw attention to our help, then our work is immediately wounded, maybe even dead. People go deaf and blind to almost anything said or done with conceit.

What if there honestly seems to be no way to remove the speck unnoticed? Then perhaps question that person's behavior directly with gentle words, or a mere questioning look. But remember to do it with love and in humility. Harshness is seldom called for. This having been said, we usually need to double check ourselves first, to be sure doing anything at all is proper.

A common reason we are often unable to see a way to help, indeed exceedingly common, is because the spirit wants us to mind our own business. The timing or situation might be wrong to involve ourselves. Even more often, our perceptions of another person's errors are mistaken, our judgment having been clouded by our own inequities or incomplete understanding. In other words, in the vast majority of situations, people lack the ability to correctly judge the visible actions of someone else's heart and soul. We can barely manage our own affairs.

Lastly, oftentimes the best way to remove a speck is simply by setting a good example. People do notice how others behave and it does make an impact. Besides, just like us, the spirit is always working to help our neighbors grow.

But when we do try to help, we need to remember to be silent about the whole thing, or at least as gentle as possible. Sometimes it helps to talk about our own sins or mistakes so an existing or potential friend can listen without being on the defensive.

Above all, we do not want to behave like a pharisee, imagining and acting as though we are better. This always deafens another person's ability to hear a different perspective.

The truth is that we all take turns helping each other.

A Wise and Gentle Rebuke

One night as I lay sleeping, (I did not know I was sleeping at the time), I was in the vast expanse of the From Everlasting and able to communicate with all of the other members of the spirit who are ruled by the authority of love.

My nature being what it was, I wanted to gauge my depth of wisdom (spiritually speaking), compared to the other members of this great collective spirit. So I determined to survey them, asking a number of them if I held a higher level of understanding than they possessed. I soon realized my question did not make sense to anyone I asked. Indeed I was speaking total gibberish in their minds, so I resolved to find another way to get an answer.

What I came up with was quite clever, for I simply asked each entity a question, the essence of which was: "Were you here when I arrived?" To my chagrin, every member, one after another, answered, "Yes." And although I cannot explain how such a thing is possible, I polled everyone one of them.

This of course made me quite despondent, as I lamented to myself that spiritually speaking, "I am the youngest one here."

Almost immediately after taking that true conclusion to heart, another member of the spirit appeared next to me. He leaned over my shoulder and whispered into my ear with noticeable conceit, "That's right; you're the youngest one here."

I cheered up a bit, and was a little wiser.

Another Wise and Gentle Rebuke

Some streams of thoughts are good and others are evil, but most are a combination of both good and evil in varying proportions. It is the same way with dreams and visions, so it is important to examine the spirits here, too. And though dreams and visions will always be of a far lesser value than actual events, since they are destined to pass away as prophecy has, they nevertheless can be of occasional value.

The time it takes to understand the important meanings of a dream or vision, if there are any, (usually there is not), can range from immediately to many years. We can even feel sure we understand them only to discover we did not, since they are so often lies, or partly lies, or in the form of parables, which is how Jesus often spoke. On rare occasions though, the true meaning of a dream or vision, or at least a part of the meaning, is clear immediately. Here is one that happened to me:

One night as I was sleeping, I was preaching to a room full of people. (I did not know I was dreaming at the time.) In the course of my sermon, I mentioned that I did not eat very much meat since the practice seems rather violent to me, was not allowed until after sin, and will not exist in the world to come, a world where “nothing shall hurt or kill.”

As I was speaking, the spirit was trying to get my attention to provide me a little help. This was not because I was not making any sense, but because what I was saying was being construed by the congregation as the lord having forbid such a thing. Furthermore, the topic is less important than so many other issues in this age.

But I would not heed the spirit’s counsel. Being conceited about my position and understanding, I continued to talk on and on about this topic against my lord’s wishes, instead of moving on to something of importance. I was just having so much fun confounding the congregation with my unanswerable arguments that I persisted. “After all,” I continued my discourse, “Which is greater, the distance between man and the animals, or the distance between man and God?”

This final question was impossible for my congregation to answer, so they sat there confounded in silence. But to my shocking surprise, there rose up from thin air and appeared in the midst of them a messenger from God, and he had an angry answer that left me speechless instead. The messenger said: “The greatest distance is man to man!”

It was such a memorable lesson, and in a dream no less. To this day I believe it only needs “man to man” replaced with “person to person” to make the wisdom in the messenger’s words perfect.

You Reap What You Sow

After many years of denying the truth about my behavior, I was exhausted from the spiritual beating I had inflicted on myself. So I asked God to help and soon found myself blessed in a number of ways. Then disaster struck – my wife took ill and died. Afterwards, I was so devastated that I could barely get from one day to the next. This was truly the saddest time of my life.

I could end the story here and hope you would feel sorry for me, as if I suffered unjustly, or as if my road is harder to travel than yours is, or has been, or will be. However, this is not the case.

The truth is that the profound sorrow I have suffered by having my wife die was what I required, for my heart was setting on self. Because of this, and her similar behavior, our spiritual growth kept slowing, and this tragedy happened primarily as a last resort for us. Indeed, we wished such heartbreak on each other. Painfully small we were for each other, spiritually speaking.

Many people remind me of the way I once was. Dishonest with themselves, their conversations about their trials and tribulations are geared to solicit the listener's praise for their character. In self-righteous darkness they blindly refuse to accept they will never convince anyone of their imaginary superiority, least of all their beloved reflection. When it comes to problems or unhappiness that originated from a spiritual cause, many people insist they had little or nothing to do with it. But that is foolishness. If you have a problem or sorrow and the origin is spiritual, then you either share the blame, or are to blame.

Small Miracle

Years ago, before my wife and I married, we were intimate with each other, which resulted in her becoming pregnant. Even though I should have married her (because I knew she was the one for me, not because she was pregnant), I insisted she get an abortion. My reasoning was because she had secretly stopped using birth control and had intentionally gotten pregnant. I did not want us to marry under this pretense.

As it happens, during this time I was employed as a taxi driver. This particular occupation provided me with lots of time to do nothing but think, since whenever business was slow I just sat there reflecting on what a shambles I had made of my life. As you might guess, one of the things I had been spending time thinking about was the abortion. Even with my beloved's deception, the genuine love that already existed between us should have given me cause to forgive her and accept the child. Under these circumstances I should not have asked her to get an abortion. After all, and I admit this to my shame – I knew she was my soul mate. She deceived me, so I was not wrong, but a better course of action was there if I could have seen it. Sadly, my heart was too hard.

Now in the course of my employment one day, I was sent to pick up a fare at one of the local churches. I remember thinking that it was an odd place for a fare, and especially so, since it was not a day for services.

When I arrived at the church, no one was there and the doors were locked. Bewildered, I got back in the car and sat down behind the wheel when I heard something behind me. I turned around to see a boy getting into my car. Where he came from I do not know, since I was just looking in that direction, but I just shrugged it off and asked him where he wanted to go.

He looked cold and distant, unfriendly, and did not even look at me when I asked where he was going. I said "hi" to him but he still never looked at me and said not a word. It was as though he did not hear me. Then I noticed he was holding an envelope, which had an address written on the outside. I politely took it from him since he could not seem to hear me, read the address, and started to drive. I looked at him again, trying to make some kind of contact, but he continued to ignore me, or could not hear me, and just kept staring straight ahead out the window.

Silently we drove along. Yet again I thought to start a conversation, but he did not speak, and so I just kept quiet myself, unsure as to whether he was ignoring me or actually could not see or hear me.

As we drove along to his destination, I found my thoughts returning over and over again to the abortion. I could not help thinking about it, and somehow I knew that something strange and marvelous was happening at that very moment.

I was completely immersed in these thoughts as I turned the car into the driveway of the address on the envelope and parked. Shutting the meter off, I realized the fare was exactly the amount in the envelope, and would have been amazed by that except that I somehow expected it. As he got out of the car, I silently watched him as he walked up the driveway towards the house, overwhelmed by the knowledge that this was the child we had aborted, and I really longed to say something to him.

Immediately he stopped and turned around to look at me. For the first time our eyes met, and I no longer saw the anger or unfriendliness in his face, only detachment, like when two strangers look at one another. Then the most amazing thing happened – he spoke to me with his mind, for his mouth never moved and my ears never heard it, but I heard his voice inside my brain as clear as if a person standing next to me had spoken! I still remember the exact words he said to me: “You’re forgiven, which is not to say you have approval.”*

I was stunned! His words were ringing in my mind as he turned again and walked to the house, and I drove away lost in amazement.

But this is still not the end. Afterwards, reflecting and marveling over what I had witnessed, I decided to drive back to revisit the house. Not as if I did not believe what had happened, but to relive it, for I was lost in wonderment. I drove down the road and turned down the street where it happened, and there to my astonishment, the house was not there! To this very day I remember the address.

* The way the boy really felt was that he had not forgiven me, but conceded I was right. However, with the benefit of hindsight you see how I feel about it now.

Sunset

That a person would pray for death might seem impossible to some people, especially when young and healthy, but it was right for me at the time (many years ago). I saw it as a way to repair the damage I had caused and I had hopes of finding joy by it. After all, the caterpillar that crawls may someday come to fly, and so it is that the person who repents and accepts the authority of Love and Equality has much to look forward to.

But this courage to cross over while young and healthy was not the brave thing it might appear to be, for it only came from the shame and repentance I felt at having discovered how small a person I was. Would you believe that I quietly rejoiced to learn my wife was seriously ill? And until an hour before she died I did not truly care.

Fortunately, I came to my senses at the last moment and hoped she would not die. But, it was not enough to change the fact that I needed to learn a hard and painful lesson. And so a part of me died as I held her in my arms and helplessly watched her take her last breath. My heart was broken.

How did I get in such a position, why did I stop caring about her? The details are not important; every love affair has a story. Basically, it was just that she had wronged me many times. But what about my own behavior? What makes it even worse is that we were best friends.

Immediately after she died my course was clear – I would pursue our reunion. Jesus said that even if we were standing at the very altar itself, if we remembered our brother had some grievance against us then we must “go away; first be reconciled to your brother, then come back and offer your gift.” This makes perfect sense to me.

Naturally, the satan in me relentlessly argues with my course of action, constantly reminding me of my wife’s injuries to me – but this is the kind of thinking that tripped me up in the first place – for what about my own sins? What a fool, blindly concluding that my spiritual twin was somehow less than myself since her sins were different than mine.

Two and eight make ten. Three and seven make ten. A child could see that different components can equal the same total. But I would not listen. Since she is my spiritual twin, she only did what I would have if I had lived her life. What a hypocrite I was.

This was the rational that led me to pray for death, though I see now, years later with the benefit of hindsight, that I only needed to pray for reunion. The spirit will work out the best way to fix things.

About four years later I received what I believed was a clear answer that my prayers had been granted, so consequently I set about to put my affairs in order. The first of which was this book for our young son, that he might know us a little better, and to make mention of some things I knew he would understand in time. In the process, I found myself writing parts of it for my wife, as a means of reaching out to her, and soon found myself writing even more for anyone who cares to read it, hoping some might benefit from the experiences I share.

Then, having completed the book, I put it away safely and waited patiently, as the time for my passing was to be very soon. This essay and many others were added years later.

I do not fully understand, but apparently I was deceived, or something else happened, for the time came and went, but I remained. How could this have happened I wondered? I was thoroughly depressed and felt very much let down. Disappointed, I gave up my commitment to strive for immediate reunion with my wife and set about to return to a more regular life again.

But I still had hopes of reunion someday, so I prayed with all sincerity for a small favor – that God would let me know by way of a sign when I was about to die. Not just any sign, but a very specific request was what I asked for, so that when the day came that I saw it, I would recognize it without a doubt. And I promised that even if it was 40 years before he answered, that I would remember what I had this day asked for. Understand, I did not ask for a sign to believe, but only to keep from being cruelly fooled again, so my conscious is clear.

Here is an amazing thing: Not a single week went by, but miracle, I beheld my special and private sign. Not 40 years did I have to wait, but only 4 days. I was forgiven and was headed home for our reunion. I renewed my faith and waited patiently.

But it was not to be. My imminent death never happened. The days turned into weeks, then months, as I again waited in vain, experiencing the cruelest illusion of them all. I had asked in genuine faith and I swear on my very salvation that I beheld the sign.

What kind of test is this? That was the question as time went by and my disappointment turned to anger. But I had no answer.

Perhaps it was to see if I would do wrong if I believed God had wronged me? But I will not. I have learned my lesson about sin. Or perhaps I was allowed to sit in God's seat, so to speak, like Job was,

and in so doing found these results. Whatever the causes, the main reason it appears that God failed me is because I am the only one that can accomplish the goal I have set. No one else may do it for me. My parents, their parents, indeed, all the members of the spirit “from everlasting” stand to the side ceaselessly encouraging me, but the work is mine alone to do. For my satan has argued that if I really believe, I will do it even if I have to do it alone. (And so it is he sets his own future by his judgments today, which are the kind of mistakes I know about).

But I take heart in knowing that at least darkness is past for me, and wherever I am in this age, (I do not know because it is not important), I do know that I will carry on.

And the answer for “what to do now” remains the same, regardless of the obstacles. I will seek our reunion, if only to apologize for my poor behavior towards a true friend. Not by doing nothing with my time but studying and reflecting, but by living my life one day at a time and learning more about love and equality, confident that in so doing my heart will make the necessary changes so my wife and I can be friends again.

I honestly believe that nothing is happier than genuine friendship.

Friends

With the exception of Christianity, I understood very little of any other religion. In my mind they did not make sense, for I was overwhelmed with amazement of Jesus. If Jesus does not fit the description of enlightened, who does? Has anyone ever spoken with such wisdom and understanding? These are the kinds of questions I put to my friends about Jesus because this is the way I felt about him. Now I know better, but I am still filled with admiration for him. And I will follow his final commandment forever.

I wondered how the Jews, Muslims, and others rejected Jesus' divinity, yet plainly acknowledge he existed, deeming him only a teacher or prophet. Many others credit Jesus with nothing at all, except that he was a person. These beliefs, and many others, go against traditional Christian dogma, but nevertheless they are absolutely correct, and beautifully so at that.

There are a number of ways by which their cases could be argued. But since true religion is ultimately completely personal, I will instead share a very personal experience, which for me goes right to the heart of the matter.

Many years ago, I tried to strike up a conversation with a man that I thought was a stranger, unaware that I was speaking to an angel. Early in the conversation I asked him his opinion of some particular scriptures, but with genuine friendship he immediately stopped me with this astounding rebuke. He simply stated, "I already have a wife." I will not digress with further commentary on the incident, except to note that my own wife was always seeing Christ in other people, so the correction was exceedingly clever.

But there is a limited amount of benefit in the retelling of marvelous personal experiences that happened to any of us, since they cannot be proved to anyone but ourselves. And there is no benefit at all in wallowing around in endless and useless debates about the christ Jesus versus the man Jesus, or Moses, Mohammed or anyone else some people call visionary. Therefore, let us defend those with a different point of view than ours with a loving answer from the next age, for the spirit is given to us all and shows us a much greater defense of different beliefs and practices being right and proper. This undeniable truth is: Everyone ruled by love has salvation.

Surely this is clear. The oak tree would be a fool to scoff at the pine tree so very different. Both trees are magnificent in their own ways, and it is the same way with people, for it just does not matter what

religion, if any, people ascribe to. If they are ruled by love, then they are a friend. And time will prove all the different perspectives from those of us ruled by love as worthy of having been heard. The spirit is poured out on the whole world, meaning we all have access to the same information, and we will all interpret and be moved by it differently.

Why care if a loving person believes different things than us? The opinion of such a person is just as good as ours, even if it is not for our heart. Again, just as there are many great trees of different types in the forest, there are many great people of different beliefs in the world. The only thing that matters is if they are ruled by love. Anyone who submits to this highest authority is worth our friendship.

The disregard for love as the only real authority is precisely the problem when it comes to religions of the world. We should not ever let anyone dictate to us what to do or think when it comes to spiritual matters. By its very nature true religion is personal, and therefore cannot be dictated to others.

People sometimes get inspired about the mysteries of life and will share their personal philosophies about it. They may even prophecy or endeavor to speak for “god” after becoming overwhelmed by other spirits and their own egos. Such behavior is largely delusional and any prophesy stemming from it is rightly utterly false to most people, yet the words will in fact be inspiration and truth to someone.

Other people are better able to control their egos and may talk about their philosophy/spirituality to others, or they may write things down, or someone else may write what they heard. Though the proponents of philosophical/spiritual things, myself included, may believe every word they speak to be true, in all of these cases it is still opinion. And we all need to treat these things as such. Think for yourself!

Every religion has at first reflected the personality and motivations of its organizers. Then it slowly gets reinterpreted in small to large part to reflect the personality and motivations of the people who inherit its custodianship. The Christian bible contains a myriad of mistakes, tamperings, and outright fabrications. It was this way from the start, before anything was written down and it was all verbal, and the fiction only got worse for centuries afterwards. It is not the “unquestionable word of God” as those ministers who practice priestcraft sell it, and though bits and pieces are inspired, the vast majority of the Bible is not. The cornerstone of all life – love one another – is in its pages, and with this one giant pearl, everything that has been added or twisted by the arrogant or business-minded has been given the benefit of the doubt, unless you really take time to think it through.

Except for love, thinking is the best of all the gifts from God. But thinking leads to questions, and questions are something most religious leaders do not like. This is because so much of what religions entail cannot withstand the scrutiny. But think you must.

Though I cannot prove it to anyone but myself, the specks of wisdom scattered throughout the Bible have their origin in a small number of mostly unknown people scattered throughout antiquity. These people had a profound grasp of spiritual things, both revealed and realized, and they shared what they understood as best they could. Some who heard were so moved by what they received that they in turn told it to others, and so on, and so forth (occasionally misinterpreting things in the retelling). More often though, others were misled by dreams or visions, while still others, filled with jealousy or seeking attention, fabricated their own inspirations, as even greater numbers of people perverted the universal truth about love into a business for money and influence, adding more fiction for their own selfish purposes.

The Christian religion, like Judaism, Islam, and all the others make no sense for spiritual adults. This is because each of us is an individual and the spirit of love is fully available to us all, forever. If our interactions with other people are ruled by love for them, the only conclusion about religion is that it must be entirely personal. Those ruled by love can never insist that someone else believe what they do, even if that other soul may appear to be hopelessly lost. To do so is a conceit equal to presuming to be able to speak for the combined spirit of the very Eternal itself.

Compared to love, no religion ever has, or ever will matter – except to the spiritually dead!

Although the checkered and painful future of mankind in this age will be one of slow growth, eventually we will be one united species. More religious lies, persecutions, terrorisms and wars are yet to be, but they will pass. The distant future will see us crossing space to visit the planets of other stars as easily as we cross oceans today. Present day religions will have long since perished, all of us knowing clearly that we report directly to the spirit of love that dwells within us. No persons among us will be so arrogant as to put themselves between another and their god.

If we could talk to leaves of a tree and ask them what they see, each would answer differently. Those in close proximity would answer similarly, while those on opposite sides of the tree might answer profoundly differently. It is just the same with people whose experiences and background are similar or different.

But if you asked each leaf the view they see looking through the stem where they connect to the tree, then the answer would be identical. Conversely, among people, love is our universal view, the identical stem we all connect to life by, and looking through the eyes of love enables us to accept and sometimes even understand differing points of view. Humanity is a big forest with room for many kinds of trees, and for this we should all be grateful, for life would be eternal hell indeed if we were all the same.

World peace begins person to person.

Love one another.

Life Story

A small child stares into a lonely sky
And asks himself his first, "Who am I?"
He feels something missing and struggles to know,
"Why are things so empty?" and, "Into what do we grow?"

The first words of sense was a comment by Christ,
About "love one another," and I knew it was right.
But selfish and stupid I went my own way,
And challenged the spirit to "Prove what you say."

If love is the answer, our friend, that you claim,
I'll test it by leaving, though I know it won't change.
I'll do what I want and hardly listen at all,
Because I know it must catch me when I start to fall.

Such was my thinking when I choose to try sin,
I denied what was certain, I just wouldn't give in.
Sorry, my friend, about love you were right,
And though I was a fool you gave up your life.

But now I know better, and I'll do what you say,
Only wishing I'd come sooner to follow the way.
But here's where I found it, so here I will stand,
And I promise to share it whenever I can.

* * *

The years went on by and my faith was true,
But my prayers went unanswered, by me and by you.
Son of god, son of man, this is what you are,
But thank you for showing me the sins in my star.

I still keep my promise to “love one another,”
And I’ll always love you, son of man, younger brother.
Thanks for your help, ours sins are forgiven,
But enough of religion, it’s time to start living.

Does my faith make you angry? I get no reply.
Did you hope I would fail and then watch me die?
Your silence, you hoped, it would count as a try,
But your lack of response, it revealed your lies.

I kept my promise to you. Did you think that I wouldn’t?
So where is my comfort? You refuse though you shouldn’t.
You must be jealous I’m faithful, so your anger stays,
Well, my friend, I still love you, but please go away.

How can I say this, after all you have done?
Have you forgot Jacob, who wrestled – near won?
And what was his reward for perseverance so true?
You crippled him for life, then wanted “thank you.”

And what about Job? About him you proclaimed:
“Not one is more righteous.” His reward was more pain!
So sometimes, we see, you forget right from wrong,
And like them, I’m a draw, or our fight will go on.

I have nothing left to lose... Okay, I never had more,
But my wife was mistaken when she ended with war.
For my heart was speaking: “Wait, I will take her.”
But she was like me, lost in self-righteous anger.

Do you get it, my friend? Can’t you see I still cry?
You mock me and challenge: Do I understand why?
Yes, you hung on a cross, but that’s nothing new.
Selfish young woman, this fool still loves you.

* * *

More years went by and our faith was still true,
Our childhood hopes, they keep shining through.
The reflection in the mirror, we brought it to life,
It has a mind of its own, and it too is right.

We're identical and opposite, perfect yet sometimes wrong,
We rejoice to discover our love will always go on.
In the face of infinity, "Who am I?" was unknown.
I would have died without you, to end my alone.

They were right, love wins, its echo we are.
In me is your origin, same for me in your star.
A miracle, some call it, or the power above,
Life forever inside us, because we believe love.

Some say death ends the bond, take another, get back in it,
But if love lives forever, reunion takes but a minute.
For those children, as such, see much smaller spaces,
True friends love forever, no one takes their places.

So I continue to wait, though demons oppose,
I don't care what they say, I know what I know.
Older sister, younger brother, Janet Lynn, beloved wife,
Heart and soul, spiritual twin, the Christ light of my life.

Notes

Denominations

- 1.) 1 Corinthians 1:12-13, 3:4

Women Ministers

- 1.) 1 Corinthians 14:34-36
- 2.) Judges 4:4-6
- 3.) Luke 2:36-38

Holy Days

- 1.) Galatians 3:2-3
- 2.) Jeremiah 31:31-33

Easter

- 1.) Matthew 12:40
- 2.) Mark 14:2
- 3.) Luke 22:8
- 4.) John 19:31, 42
- 5.) Luke 24:44

We Are Gods

- 1.) John 10:34
- 2.) Psalms 82:6
- 3.) Hebrews 12:9

Marriage in Heaven

- 1.) Matthew 25:1
- 2.) Song of Solomon 3:11

Eternal Hell

- 1.) Luke 16:26
- 2.) Revelation 21:7

The Trinity

- 1.) Psalms 110:1
- 2.) Zechariah 12:8
- 3.) John 12:28

A God Grows Up

- 1.) Psalms 2:7

Mistakes

- 1.) Isaiah 50:1
- 2.) Zechariah 13:6

Judas

- 1.) Isaiah 42:19
- 2.) Psalms 22:1-6
- 3.) 2 Samuel 11:2-17
- 4.) Psalms 139:22-24

Prophecy

- 1.) Zechariah 13:3

Different Realities

- 1.) Luke 17:37

Equality and the Sexes

- 1.) Revelation 12:1
- 2.) Isaiah 66:24, Mark 9:48
- 3.) Jeremiah 30:6

Inexorable Conclusions

- 1.) John 16:12-13

